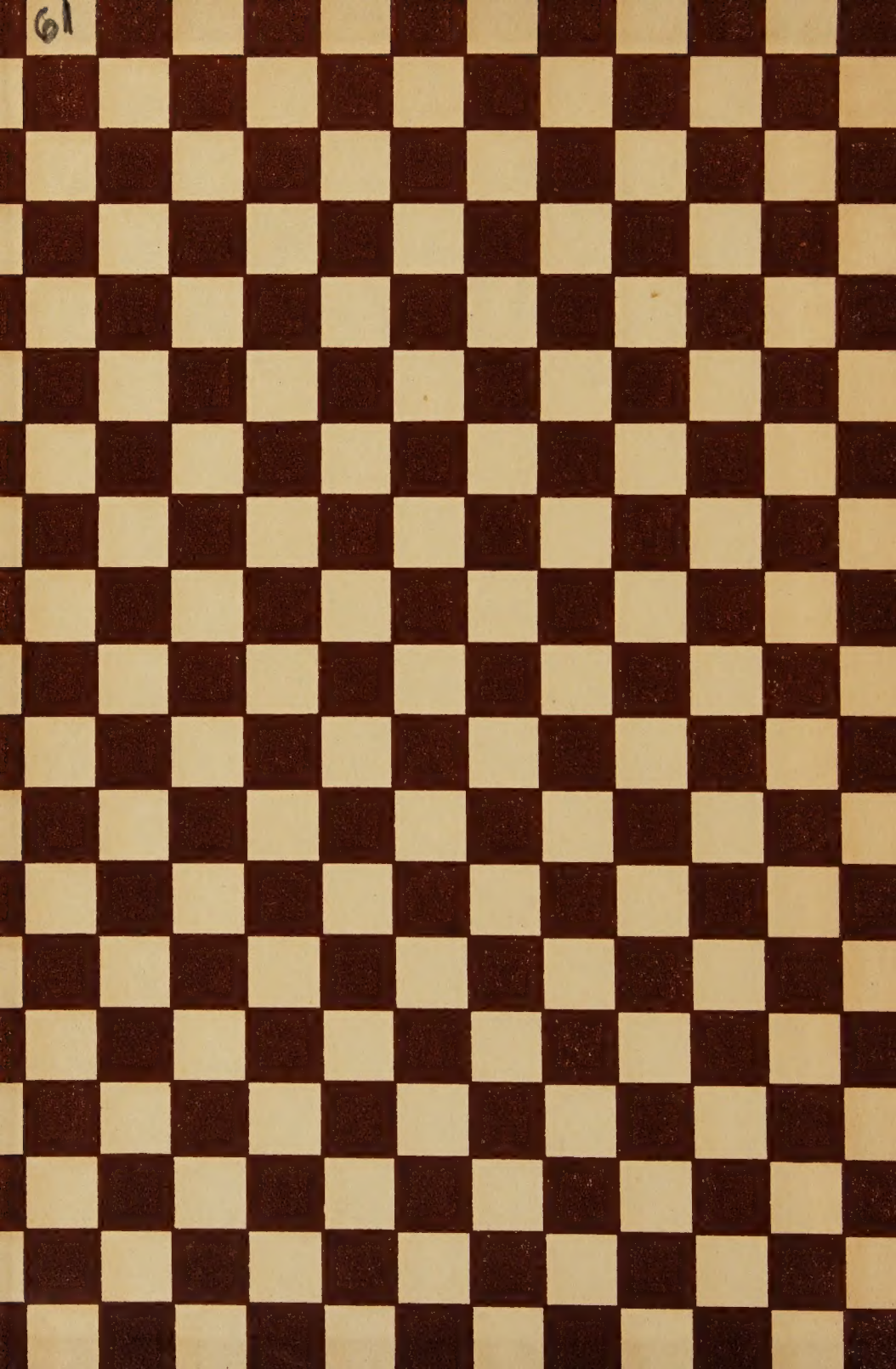
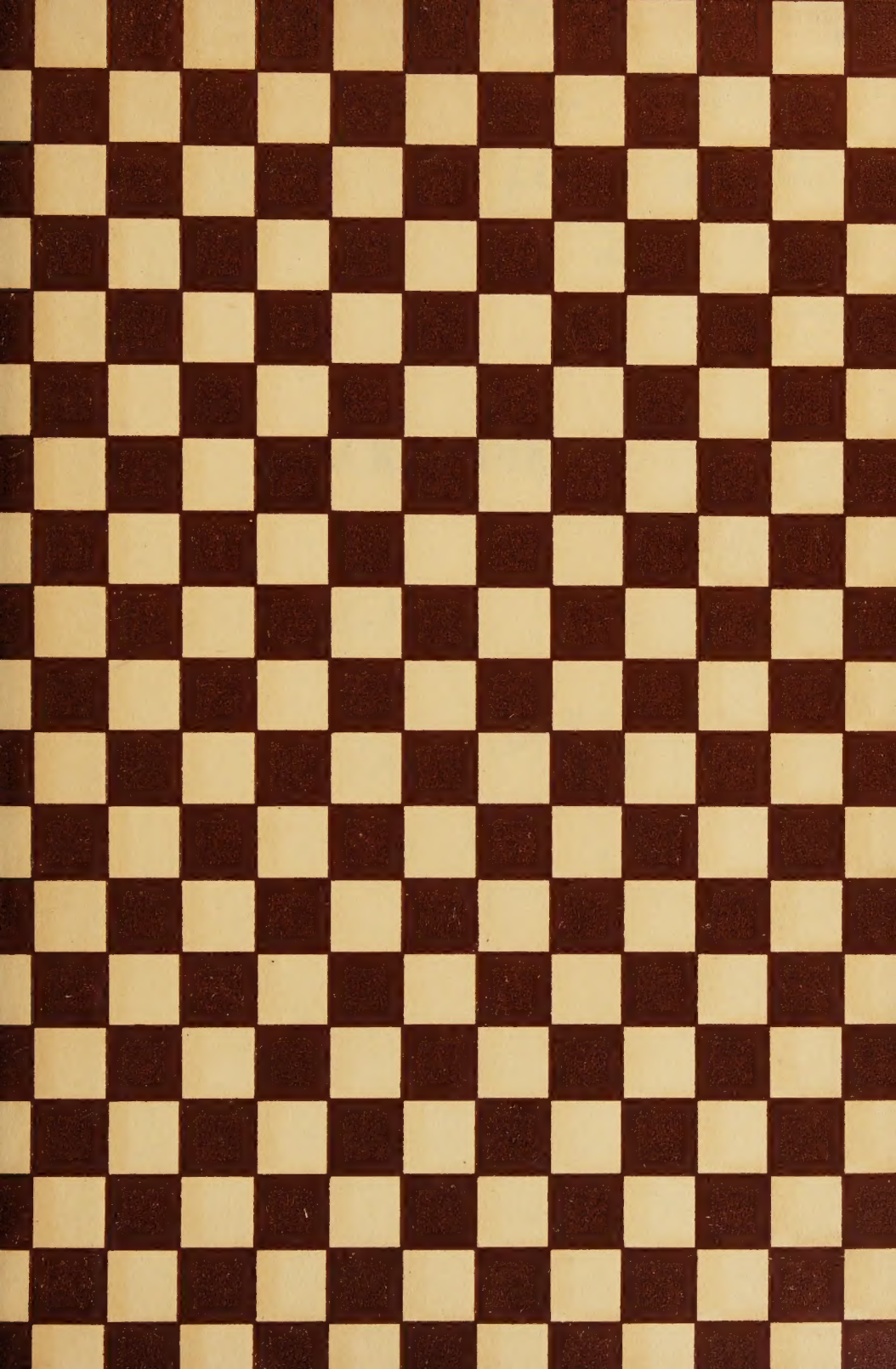






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Ken Crossley.
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Dec. 1928.

BLACK SADIE

1928

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white
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Catholic
convert

b. Virginia 1887



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BLACK SADIE

A Novel

BY

T. BOWYER CAMPBELL

(Thomas)



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

The Riverside Press Cambridge

1928

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The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE • MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

BLACK SADIE

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I

BLACK SADIE'S father was hanged several months before she was born. Lightfoot Mose died on the gallows for raping an old white woman. He descried her one evening in her cowshed milking her cow. It was an easy matter for him to throttle her. Two hours later the sheriff caught Mose hiding in the high poke-weeds behind Aunt Nancy Ritchie's cabin, and in a brief time Mose found himself in jail. His victim exhibited to all the proper authorities the two blue handprints on her scraggly neck well down towards the shoulders. In a day or so she got out of bed and occupied herself with her usual domestic duties.

Nevertheless Lightfoot Mose was condemned to be hanged. He quite enjoyed the publicity incident to the trial. The notoriety was a distinction. The courtroom was filled with all his colored friends and acquaintance, and the white people made much of the occasion too. Mose was pleased and gratified at the amount of attention he got. But Mose's

hanging was private. He regretted that. It seemed an anticlimax. His friends regretted it too. So did the Ritchie family, though Mose did not belong to their clan save by a most brief liaison with one of Aunt Nancy's daughters. Ella Ritchie, quick to assume importance, disclosed the fact that she was with child and that 'Mr. Mose' had been her friend and was responsible for her condition. She bragged about it up and down the neighborhood.

Old Nancy thereupon conceived it devolved upon her to administer a public beating to her wayward daughter. The kin and acquaintance of the family would expect some demonstration, and it would be timely as an extra flourish to the already pleasing importance of the family. A gratifyingly large number of people assembled at the sound of Nancy's rich imprecations. But Unc' Amos interposed between the angry negress and the girl. Aunt Nancy was foiled. She flung down her broomstick, struck an attitude, and delivered a peroration suitable to the occasion. She wished all and sundry to understand that the Scripture proved her magnanimity in sparing Ella a castigation. In this case it little behooved her to cast the first stone, or, as it happened to be,

a broomstick, at the guilty one, because . . . and she decorated aptly the account of the woman taken in adultery in the Gospel. Two of Nancy's own sons, Beau Jim and Lucky Andrew, were themselves illegitimate. Nancy regretted that no one had ever been hanged for her glory and distinction. Some even tarried in the penumbra of her favor to subsist on viands of her providing, though if the bounty were traced to its source it would be found to come from the rich opportunities of Ole Miss's kitchen, where Nancy flourished as cook in ordinary.

Mose was converted in the jail. As he walked to the gallows, he ruminated with pride on the unprecedented glory of his approaching obsequies. After the hanging, everybody went to the funeral at Shiloh Baptist Church. Ella went too, supported on the arm and bosom of her affectionate mother. They were accorded places with the chief mourners. Both women wailed and lamented with becoming vigor and importance. That was consoling to all. At appropriate climaxes Ella fainted dead away, and Nancy called on heaven to witness the justice of her cause. But in fact the congregation witnessed to Ella's perceptibly enlarging form.

Five months later Black Sadie was born. Ella died at the same time. Aunt Nancy wrapped the inky morsel of humanity in red flannel rags and deposited her in Ole Miss's empty clothes-basket. Ella was laid out on the ironing-board propped on two chairs. Everybody came to see. She was a fine sight with twenty-five-cent pieces on her eyes and patent-leather shoes on her feet. Ole Miss gave the shoes to Nancy from Mr. Tom's closet. Nancy was proud. The Ritchie family felt sated with importance. The funeral was Sunday afternoon.

Black Sadie had convulsions. Even at six weeks old she was manifestly destined to fame . . . a hanged father, a dead mother, convulsions. The Ritchie household was greatly upset. Unc' Amos shifted his 'buck-eye hoss-ches'nut' from the right hip pocket to the left to change the 'luck.' Aunt Thorry (a collapsed form of Dorothy) advised 'medicine,' vaguely. Queer Sister sat on the edge of the woodbox laughing uproariously. But Aunt Nancy rendered rabbit fat and oiled the infant. Black Sadie pulled through.

She got her teeth later, not without effort on her part and sharp reprimand from those

whose slumbers were disturbed by her wails. Sleeping quarters at Aunt Nancy's were congested at best. Beau Jim, perhaps to brazen out his own questionable origin, threatened to throw the bastard brat out in the cornfield. Aunt Thorry guffawed at this humorous subtlety, while Unc' Amos, peering down from his sleeping accommodations in the loft, observed that 'God would judge.' The teething was a severe test of the family loyalty to Ella's baby. When it was safely over, it was plain that Black Sadie's position in the family was sound beyond a doubt. Innocent babe, her personality scored a triumph over the inimically disposed elders of the Ritchie clan.

When Sadie was five, Lucky Andrew gave her two two-cent pieces he had come by in a crap game. Unc' Amos bored holes in them and Aunt Thorry strung the coins on bits of silver wire to make earrings. She twitched and pinched the lobes of Black Sadie's ears till they tingled and lost all feeling; then she punctured them with a large needle and inserted waxed thread in the holes to keep them open. When the perforations healed, she adorned the little pickaninny with the dangling copper ornaments. Sadie

was very proud of them. She shook her head continually to feel the delightful weight of the two-cent pieces. The arrogant oscillations made Queer Sister jealous. It was delicious to elude the clumsy idiot girl by dexterous runs and dives.

Once in two weeks Aunt Nancy combed out Sadie's nappy hair. It was kinky, abundant, obstinate. Aunt Nancy pinioned the reluctant child between vicelike knees, arms immovable, legs helpless, and then she divided the scalp into a great number of small squares, gathered up the wool in each into tiny, tight plaits. Each plait she bound with bits of red or white twine. The result had the appearance of a small cocoanut stuck all over with spines. Black Sadie wriggled and wept throughout the ordeal, but when the travail was over, she admired exceedingly the elegant coiffure. It was a work of art and a marvel.

Aunt Nancy was cook for Ole Miss at the big house. It was a lucrative position for her. Ole Miss was very kind, and she shut her eyes to Nancy's many shortcomings and predatory ways. Peace is a valuable asset in any household. Ole Miss gave simple orders in the pantry, but she kept a blind eye for the kitchen.

Nancy ruled and occupied entirely her own domain.

Aunt Nancy promised Black Sadie daily lodgment in the kitchen when she came to six years old. But before that day arrived, Ole Miss had already encountered little Black Sadie. The meeting was very embarrassing for both. They felt the strain in wholly different ways. It was summer. Sadie cooled her toes in the trickle of water in the gutter in front of her home. Ole Miss came by, walking slowly on the high plank walk above the street. Her black silk skirts made a charming sound about her well-shod heels. Sadie wore a single calico shift, much soiled with grease and drippings from her infantile nostrils. When she saw Ole Miss, high and grand and terrifying, on the walkway above her, she lifted the shift to cover her embarrassed head. That was all of little Black Sadie that was covered. Three small males, also in the gutter, became hilarious at the sight and uttered many cutting and apposite remarks. When Ole Miss got home, she spoke sharply to Nancy and gave her an old chemise with peremptory orders to make drawers for her granddaughter. Thus Sadie's wardrobe began and her vanity enlarged at the

same time. Drawers have a genuine psychic importance.

Aunt Thorry had a daughter. Her name was Quecene (an attractive vocalization caught by Nancy's ear from frequent remarks of Ole Miss relative to the housekeeping). Quecene was seventeen years old when Black Sadie turned five. She was very proud. Black Sadie admired her august cousin, but she worshiped from afar. Quecene rarely deigned to admit the fact of Sadie's existence; when she did so condescend the recognition was apt to be violent and quite unpleasant for Sadie.

Quecene was a good laundress. She served in that capacity to Ole Miss's household. On Monday mornings she carried home the huge bundle of bed and table linen balanced like a vast turban on her head, and the hamper of sundries she supported with one hand while Nancy's twelve-year-old Dave grasped the handle on the other side. On Friday nights the wash was returned to the big house. The intervening days of the week afforded Quecene many leisure opportunities to disport herself in such items of wearing apparel as pleased her fancy. Mr. Tom's collars gave quite a distinguished finish to her own gingham shirt-waists.

Sadie often contrived bundles of rags and clothes and practiced carrying them on her head after the fashion of Quecene with the mountainous turban of wash. Aunt Thorry delighted in this infantile mimicry. She pre-vised in Sadie a competent laundress and said as much. The game entertained Queer Sister also. But Quecene considered it impertinent and offensive. If she caught the little nigger at it, she smacked her face. Tears, up-braidings, sulking pouts followed such scenes, the different emotions appropriate to the reactions of the several persons concerned.

Once, on Thursday, Quecene had finished the wash for the week, all but ironing the sheets. They still flapped drying on the line. The day was very cold, so cold that it made Sadie think of snow. She went out in the back yard to observe the condition of the sky. But the sky was crystal clear. There was no chance of snow. Sadie's preoccupation with the thought became entangled with the sight of the vast white sheets billowing in the wind. Spread out on the earth they would look just like snow. It was an intriguing, provocative idea. Sadie generously gave one glance toward the cabin door as if to give Quecene at least

one sporting chance to interfere, but that worthy's star was at the moment in eclipse. Very quickly Sadie tore down all the sheets and the ground was soon white with an excellent semblance of snow. Sadie romped riotously over the drifts. It was most exhilarating. She was wholly unprepared for the sudden and furious arrival of Quecene. That unreasonable and irate person threatened scalding water and a red-hot poker.

Sadie fled before the tempest. She made her way straight to Ole Miss's kitchen and the cover of Aunt Nancy's capacious authority and power. She blubbered out a tragic story of Quecene's unwarrantable wrath and was appeased with baked sweet potato and Aunt Nancy's threats 'to wallop 'at yaller gal fer hollerin' at my chile.' Here Beau Jim discovered Sadie, when he arrived at dark 'to see Ma home.' He said that Quecene still cursed and wept, vowing vengeance, and that Aunt Thorry 'had a spell' because she thought Black Sadie was lost in Bollin's woods. Under double protection and with determined resolves forming in her thin breast, Black Sadie walked meekly home between Aunt Nancy and Beau Jim. 'She shan't tetch yer,' said Aunt Nancy. 'I'll bash in her haid,' said Beau Jim.

Thenceforward, every day, Black Sadie accompanied Aunt Nancy to the kitchen at the big house. She sat in the big, smoky place throughout the day, connecting her small person with delectable viands that came her way from time to time. At evening Aunt Nancy would give her a small pail to 'tote,' and she would go home under the immediate escort of her protectress and Beau Jim, or Lucky Andrew, followed by Dave, or one of the other boys. After many weeks Quecene forgot her grudge. Safety and calm became again the portion of the small black child. But the precedent of spending the days in Ole Miss's kitchen was established, and Black Sadie had no mind to break the custom.

Ole Miss was aware of the fact that Nancy largely fed her tribe from the big house larder. She sometimes saw the procession of Ritchies wending its way at evening, homeward bound, each member but half concealing a comestible burden. But Ole Miss was wise. She reminded herself of the Pauline doctrine that where there is no law there is no sin. So charity abounded, and much provender changed hands undesignated as stolen food.

Aunt Nancy soon grew accustomed to hav-

ing Sadie with her. She sat quiet and inoffensive in the shadows by the biscuit block. After a while she really enjoyed the child's companionship. She was a more desirable auditor than the cat for her varied remarks and reflections, though Sadie herself rarely said a word. She found her useful also for running errands between the house and the kitchen, and Sadie gained the approbation of Ole Miss by holding things for Aunt Nancy when that personage repaired every morning to the store-room door to receive the quota of supplies for the day.

One day Ole Miss placed aside on a platter a pound or two of hard, fresh butter. Later she turned to cut off some for Nancy's cooking ration. The butter was nowhere to be seen. Where had it gone? The gaze of Ole Miss came to rest on Sadie. The abdomen of that minute person was unduly protuberous. Sadie supported its bulging weight with both hands. But the butter was already well beyond control. The front of Sadie's calico dress grew dark and oily with the melting grease. It oozed through the thin fabric of the garment, surrounding the clutching fingers; it flowed sluggishly in thick yellow blobs down Sadie's

spindling black legs. Ole Miss said that Sadie must never come to the storeroom again. She was shocked and surprised that she should have stolen butter and hidden it under her dress. Aunt Nancy was shocked and surprised, too, but her mortification lay in shame for Sadie's maladroitness and the detection. True Ritchies were never caught. Black Sadie wept beside the biscuit block disgraced.

The sad event solicited the notice and chagrin of Miss Belle. She felt sorry for Sadie and wished to do her good. It was very sad that the black people grew up without instruction in right principles and noble ideals. Miss Belle thought Sadie ought to be guided and instructed. For her a knowledge between good and evil seemed an immediate necessity. So Miss Belle constituted herself preceptress.

Miss Belle was Ole Miss's maiden daughter, no longer quite young. She clung to the fancies and fashions of her girlhood and wore bunches of sandy curls over each ear and a waterfall behind. She supported basques and gores, and her sleeves were called 'mutton-leg.' Miss Belle practiced gavottes and études on the square piano in the parlor for an hour every afternoon. On Sundays she played hymns and

sang them in a thin but not unmusical soprano. She had a little work-table constructed of willow sticks. The bark was still on, and the tops, where they had been sawed off, were elegantly gilded. The arrangement of the sticks was most artistically haphazard. A band of red ribbon girdled the table's irrational middle, and wicker pockets hung over the sides. In them Miss Belle kept her 'work.'

At this little work-table, every day after the episode of the butter, Sadie sat on one side and Miss Belle on the other while she gave the little negress lessons. She taught her to know the letters and to spell by syllables . . . a-b AB, e-b EB, i-b IB, o-b OB, u-b UB, and so on. Miss Belle taught Sadie to count, to tell the time on the face of a clock, to read the days and seasons on the calendar, and to embroider daisies on a piece of red silk. She read a chapter in the Bible every morning and explained to Sadie about heaven. Sadie already knew a good deal about hell. She had learned it from the conversations of her elder kith and kin when they were angry.

Instructions continued for two years. Black Sadie maintained the outward mien of docile though nondescript pupil. But she learned to

read and to cipher. She could also repeat from memory 'Once in Royal David's City' and 'I Think When I Read That Sweet Story of Old,' and Miss Belle hoped that the day would come when she would be able to remember the words of the collects in the Prayer Book. Sadie could say 'Our Father' with her hands folded and her eyes shut. On the whole she was a creditable pupil. Miss Belle felt pleased with her.

But now and then small objects of no great value disappeared from tray or pincushion on Miss Belle's bureau . . . a pin, a cuff-link, a small tortoise-shell comb, and such like. Miss Belle would be grieved, but she would not despair. She thought it wiser not to tax Sadie with pilfering, but to try to turn her heart and waken her conscience by gentle and loving instruction. Sadie liked the gentleness and love, while she appreciated the opportunities for enlarging her possessions. The instruction did not seem in her eyes quite necessary or profitable, but she never allowed it to disturb her soul or cloud the demure aspect of her countenance.

In the spring each year, Ole Miss, a shawl over her head and her square, leather key-

basket on her arm, busied herself out-of-doors. She superintended Unc' Roes in the garden, or on the lawns, or attended to the setting of her hens. There was much to be done in the dark of the moon in March. In the garden, the tubers of all sorts had to be planted, the garden squares ploughed, and the asparagus bed burned off; the lawns must be raked and the flower beds prepared for planting; all the chickens had to be kerosened under their wings and on top of their heads on each side of the red combs. In the house, all the beds were dismantled. A feather, dipped in a concoction of oil, salt, and poison, was drawn firmly along the jointures of the bedsteads and down the seams and around the leather rosettes of the mattresses. These ceremonies and precautions were never omitted. Ole Miss directed them all.

One day Ole Miss ordered the annual holocaust of the asparagus bed. For weeks Unc' Roes had dragged brushwood, rakings from the lawn, empty barrels and boxes from the cellars, all the litter of the place, and piled up the asparagus bed ready for the burning. At the fiat for fire Black Sadie thrilled with delight. She wished ardently to help, but she was

too shy to make herself conspicuous and her tactics were never obtrusive in any private undertaking of her own. In this instance she followed Unc' Roes at a distance into the garden and waited beside the gate while he went to fetch his rake with which to control the fallings from the fire. He had put a long piece of twisted paper and a box of matches on the scantling of the garden fence. Black Sadie saw him lay them there. Sadie eyed the tempting combustibles. She waited a long time for Unc' Roes's return. He delayed aggravatingly. Sadie conceived the thought of hastening matters by just kindling the fire herself. A blazing fire was the immediate object of her soul. She was not quite sure where or what the asparagus bed was, but she saw a stand of high dead grass in the bottom of the garden below the grape arbors. It would make a lovely fire. Sadie assured herself that the grass lot could be no other than the asparagus bed. The question settled to her satisfaction, she lit her torch and proceeded to apply it.

The fire in the high grass was an unexpected surprise. A great many people came to see. They trampled down the newly turned garden plots and the flower beds on the lawn. Several

panels of paling fence were destroyed, but the carriage house and the gentlemen's privy (cryptically called 'Number Ten') behind it were saved from the flames. Fighting the fire was very exciting. Black Sadie danced with joy when the ancient carriage, unused for many years, came rolling out of the big doors to a safe place in the yard. Sadie put down the steps of the carriage and climbed in. She sat on the driver's box and played 'driving' the rest of the afternoon.

When the fire was over and Ole Miss was drinking sangaree to restore her nerves, Unc' Roes committed a tactical blunder. It deflected the normal development of his career, eliminating him from that sphere of the industrial world in which until this time he had every reason to suppose himself a part. He came to Ole Miss and said, 'Now, Miss, mus' I burn dat sparry-grass bed?' It was more than Ole Miss could endure after the alarms and dangers of the afternoon. She also blamed her gardener for the fire, no one having sufficient information to enlighten her to the contrary. 'Roes, I will pay you your wages and you may leave my employ. I cannot trust you at all.' So Unc' Roes moved the same evening from his

room over the stable at Ole Miss's to a lean-to at Aunt Nancy's cabin. He complained of 'rheumatiz' and 'misery' to account for the reversal of his fortunes. He himself was much too mystified as to the origin of the fire to lay the blame on anybody. He felt so discouraged that he never sought for work again, but settled down into an indigent old age on Nancy's bounty. Black Sadie was very sorry for Unc' Roes. He seemed so sad.

In the early months of the summer Ole Miss's hens strutted forth surrounded by flocks of yellow chicks. Black Sadie loved them dearly. At feeding-time she was allowed to throw the soft mushy food through the slats of the feeding-coops. The fluffy little fowls ran in and out pecking up the food, the mother hens clucked pompously on the outside. Once a large dominica matron, a quarrelsome, irritable fowl, took offense at Sadie's too close attentions to her brood. She flew up in the child's face with a furious onslaught. Black Sadie screamed with terror. Ole Miss called loudly for help. Aunt Nancy came to the rescue. Ole Miss ordered the irate dominica to be slain then and there and her brood to be distributed amongst the flocks of less belliger-

ent mothers. It was done. Sadie was appeased and helped to pluck the carcass of her enemy. It was not good for much, being very tough and thin after the brooding. Aunt Nancy saved the breast feathers for a pillow. The two wings were spread out and fastened down by heavy flatirons. Ole Miss said Sadie might have one for a fan.

By July or August the chickens were large enough to broil or fry. Every day Aunt Nancy cut off the heads of several of the likeliest. The execution came as complete surprise to the chickens, who had hitherto fancied themselves as the highly privileged among fowls. As at the hatching, so at the death, Black Sadie was on hand to assist. When the axe fell, she leapt with nervous glee well out of range of the convulsive plunges of the headless victims. Later she gathered up all the heads, pulled open the soft yellow eyelids, and poked straws down the beaks. The ends of the straws stuck out of the severed gullets.

But Ole Miss's chickens fascinated others than Sadie in the Ritchie family. Sadie found them satisfactory enough alive or dead on the premises of the big house, but Aunt Nancy had a fancy for carrying them home to her cabin.

Unc' Roes, now a permanent pensioner in the cabin, and Unc' Amos liked fried chicken. Obviously they had to eat something. What better than chicken? Even Queer Sister showed an epicurean discernment between chicken and less succulent viands. Under protection of stormy nights, Lucky Andrew and Beau Jim also obeyed a cosmic urge for chicken-stealing. They made successful visits to the hen roost at the big house. Black Sadie exulted in these nocturnal triumphs. Late at night, when she heard the fall of the cover on the box behind the stove where the booty was confined, she would think of the drop of the gallows trap, which she had repeatedly heard foretold as the doom for which the boys were destined. In the morning she would peep through the cracks at the captured chickens and whisper: 'Ya'll soon be daid. Oh-yo!'

Ole Miss had a grandson. His name was Mr. Tom. His mother was dead and his father was a ne'er-do-well who had run away. Mr. Tom lived with his grandmother and his aunt, Miss Belle. The day he was twenty-one Ole Miss gave him a buggy. It had rubber-tired, yellow wheels. The whip flaunted a bright red ribbon.

When Mr. Tom drove out in his buggy, he wore a straw hat in the summertime and a derby in the winter; a linen robe covered his knees in the one season and a frayed bearskin in the other. He used to take young ladies of his acquaintance for the air.

Black Sadie considered Mr. Tom a paragon of men. She admired his person and she admired his elegant clothes. 'Poor Tom has a race-track taste in dress,' sighed Ole Miss at his flashy wardrobe. 'Ain't he jes' gran'?' said Aunt Nancy, when he passed under the kitchen window. Black Sadie sometimes found opportunities, when Mr. Tom was gone and Ole Miss slept on the library sofa and Miss Belle practiced on the piano, to steal up to his room and, hiding behind the half-closed closet door, try on the tan shoes with the cloth tops and the shiny row of buttons down the sides. The shoes were far too big for Sadie, but she gloried in the roomy elegance. Sometimes she would even venture outside the stuffy closet into the vaster freedom of the room. Here she would make a stealthy peregrination, sliding her feet around with a skating motion and admiring herself in the oblique pier-glass between the windows.

Often when Mr. Tom drove out of the yard,

Black Sadie would run behind the yellow-wheeled buggy to close the gate after him. Once she did not return immediately to Aunt Nancy and the kitchen. She tarried at the gate to see Mr. Tom drive past with the lady of the day. She pushed her small person well out of sight under the beetling hedge and sat down on a stone. Presently the buggy came, rolling down the road. Beside Mr. Tom jounced Miss Flora Lee, holding a green silk parasol at a bewitching angle over her shoulder. Sadie darted out from her hiding-place to follow the flashing yellow wheels. She caught hold of the box at the back and swung her feet clear of the ground. The vehicle carried her forward fast as the wind. Sadie could feel the ticklish draughts about her legs. She hoisted herself into the box. The buggy drove on for miles. Sadie grew tired and drowsy. She lay down on the floor and was soon asleep. She was awakened by a scream. It was Miss Flora Lee. Sadie was discovered. Mr. Tom was furious. They drove back to town, Sadie standing up in the box and holding on to the back of the seat. Mr. Tom would not speak a word. Miss Flora Lee laughed a great deal and asked Sadie many pointed questions.

'If you damned little snotty coon ever climb in my buggy again,' swore Mr. Tom to Sadie, when he got her by herself, 'I'll horsewhip the livin' hide off you. I don't want to ever see you in my grandma's kitchen again either. So get out and go home.'

Mr. Tom had exacted from Ole Miss the promise of Sadie's banishment as some slight satisfaction for the humiliating wrongs suffered at her hands. And Ole Miss was stern in her complaint to Nancy about Sadie's unprecedented behavior, but Ole Miss and Miss Belle laughed merrily over the affair, unknown to Mr. Tom or Sadie. Nevertheless Sadie had to depart from the kitchen at the big house. Aunt Nancy grumbled in private, but she did not protest the mandate. She said: "'Tain't fer long,' and, 'Jess you wait.' But Black Sadie felt that life was over.

Black Sadie was now eight years old. Dave and Kiddo and Joe, three male relatives of indefinable kinship, received her into their company. They ranged the fields and woods together, wild and impudent and provocative. They gathered birds' nests, pilfered fruit from orchards, stoned the cattle, and thrust sticks

and sods into springs. They gathered pokeberries to make paint and medicine. With the paint, they scrawled REPENT on white board fences; the medicine was forcibly administered to Aunt Thorry's tame crow. The crow died. In the autumn nuts were plentiful, chestnuts and chinquapins. Sadie hoarded her gatherings, boiled them in a tin can, and strung them into lengthy necklaces. From these edible ornaments she fed at frequent intervals of time and space.

The neighborhood of Aunt Nancy's home boasted an ancient tomcat, wild and ferocious, the lover and sire of most of the cabin pussies, and the implacable enemy of all the feline males. He bore tattered ears and many scars to mark his prowess and prestige. He lived everywhere and nowhere. One summer's day, Dave proposed the capture of this redoubtable beast and his summary execution. Black Sadie kindled to the scheme because she pre-vised a sumptuous funeral afterwards. She would be chief mourner and exhibit many hidden talents for grief. Dave captured a sparrow and tied him in a box placed under the cabin window. 'Dat Cat' with lashing tail and slobbering jaws was quickly lured by this

tender bait. He sprang into the box. In an instant, Dave let fall a heavy board and leapt through the window to secure by his weight the lid of his improvised trap. The enraged and terrified animal plunged furiously against the sides of his cage. Joe quickly nailed down the board on which Dave sat, and 'Dat Cat' was a prisoner.

A procession formed to convey the prize to death. Dave and Joe went first carrying the trap; Kiddo and Sadie waltzed excitedly behind. The place of execution was a pool in a stream at the edge of the woods, but Aunt Thorry and Quecene were seen to be washing linen in the pool, so the children turned away.

'Les put 'im under de cyars,' they said, and directed their steps towards the railway.

At the top of a high cutting they awaited the coming of a train, intending to pitch the crate with the cat in it down the steep side of the cutting under the wheels of the cars. A snarling coal train approached. As it crashed by, the three boys heaved the box down the steep declivity of the cutting. It burst violently asunder and 'Dat Cat' sprang nimbly away down the side of the track, leaving with supreme *sangfroid* three astonished little ne-

groes perched high up on the extreme edge of the cutting.

With the escape of the cat life seemed dull. It was then that they conceived the idea of 'hookin' a ride'; at least Dave and Joe did. Kiddo and Sadie quailed at the thought of boarding a moving train. But all four of them discussed the question of ways and means. 'Dey goes by kinder slow here,' said Dave, 'cause hit's up-grade. It 'ud be jess as easy to hook on.'

In about an hour another train rolled pompously up the track. Dave and Joe awaited it, crouching like young panthers in the gutter of the cutting. When about half the train had passed by, Dave sprang at an iron rod above a pair of little iron steps. Black Sadie screamed. Dave missed and fell. The wheels went over his arm, crushing off the hand at the wrist. It was a sad and frightened cortège that led the mangled child home to Nancy's cabin.

When Black Sadie was fifteen, she was tall and flat like a plank. Her occiput was flat, too, and mounted up to a wonderful height behind. Her head was poised on her neck like an egg

on a short staff. She had a small, sensitive nose, and two rich eyes sunk deep in bony sockets. Her upper lip was very long and thin, while the lower lip was short and heavy, like a puff of flesh on the small round chin. Sadie's hair stuck out in a bush all over her head. She ceased to plait it in the numerous small pigtales of her childhood. When she was working she tied it down flat under a red bandanna handkerchief. She desired to wear corsets, like the buxom Quecene, but it was unnecessary. She had no breasts. Her chest was as hard and scrawny as a child's. She carried herself easily. Her thin arms and legs were not without a shapely maturity, and were as strong as steel. Unlike most negroes, Black Sadie's feet were neat and small, the bones delicate and well placed, though she never wore either shoes or stockings in the summer, and only shapeless, shoddy gear in the winter. Nancy said: 'She's like po' Ella.' And Unc' Roes averred that 'Mose had a head like a pear.' But Quecene swore that 'that black gal better not give herself no airs.' Black Sadie herself seemed serenely indifferent to all comment.

Black Sadie was an industrious soul. She did most of the menial work of the cabin —

cooking, cleaning. She worked quickly and efficiently. Aunt Nancy continued to hold her place as cook for Ole Miss at the big house. Aunt Thorry and Quecene busied themselves with wash. Unc' Roes resided in rheumatic seclusion in his lean-to, and Queer Sister diversified his days by frequent visits to his domain. Merry visits. She sat on the edge of the bed, squirming, giggling. Unc' Roes occupied a split-bottomed chair, leaning his elbows on the top of a cane. He made divers edifying observations for Queer Sister's benefit at the time of these visits, all of which she received with hilarious nonchalance.

The two older boys, Beau Jim and Lucky Andrew, worked now and then at odd jobs in the town. But usually their occupation was 'shooting craps,' sometimes winning, sometimes losing. Once Beau Jim provoked a fight with razors because other devotees of the game discovered him playing with loaded dice. His forehead and the backs of his hands were badly cut. For days he remained housed in Aunt Nancy's cabin while Quecene put turpentine rags over his wounds. The boys also thieved when possible. Jail often punctuated this pastime. Once Lucky Andrew spent seven weeks

in the embrace of the law. When he came out of prison, he disappeared. Nobody knew where he had gone. Nobody cared at all. In the family, it was one less mouth to feed. Aunt Nancy opined that he would prosper well anywhere. He was born when the moon cupped luck. And Aunt Thorry, who disliked the sly youth, muttered under her breath that he would hang heavy here or yonder. Better yonder.

One-armed Dave, after his accident on the railway track, suddenly grew up. At sixteen he was a mature man. He had character too. That was a surprise. It was not a Ritchie trait — character. People learned to trust him. He got the job of driver for the municipal ice-wagon. He sat on a high front seat, almost as high as the hood of the wagon, and from this swaying throne he ruled the destinies of the vehicle, holding the long reins in his single hand, and guiding the heavy Percherons by the tones of his voice, all sorts of incomprehensible vocalizations to which the horses were acutely sensitive. Every day the ice-wagon went down the road past the Ritchie cabin. Jangling bells announced its advent. There were small bells on the horses' harness, and a large bell that hung on a spring on one side of

the hood at the back. Dave's helper, who chopped the ice and delivered it in the pantries, operated this bell by pulling a wire to make it clang. On the other side of the hood the scales and grippers dangled from a hook. The helper stood on a swaying step, ready to jump up or down as business required. When Sadie heard the coming of the ice-wagon, she would run out to the road to receive from the hand of the helper a bucket of ice-chips scraped up from the floor of the wagon. With this ice she chilled bottles of root-beer.

Unc' Amos essayed a little gardening behind the cabin. He raised some Indian-corn and a patch of potatoes every year. They were always measly crops. He kept a sty of pigs, and spent long hours trudging over the town, a large pail in each hand, to collect slops for his swine. The heavy pails made him walk with a rolling gait like a sailor. Unc' Amos loved his pigs tenderly.

Quecene was the vitriolic member of the household. 'She sure do favor Nancy,' was the frequent comment of Aunt Thorry. But Aunt Nancy, because of being at the big house, had limited opportunities for displaying her talents of temper. She was seldom at home except for

repose. But Quecene's high and angry tantrums were fearful to behold. The least provocation set her in a rage. Everybody was afraid of her. Even Queer Sister would be numbed by one of Quecene's outbursts of fury. Their violence often exhausted her. She would be hoarse and red-eyed for days.

At length Quecene 'got religion.' For years she had been urged 'to come through.' But revival after revival at the Shiloh Baptist Church passed its fires and thunders over the sinners and mourners and Quecene remained still unconverted. It was most humiliating. Sometimes she would cease to speak, moving about the house in a trancelike state. 'She's seekin',' said Aunt Thorry in a whisper. But there was no success. Quecene dallied with her soul. Night after night she would sit stolid and impassive in the church, and the hurricane of the preaching passed over her like water over a stone. The congregation watched her closely. Would Quecene come through? Ah, Sister! Ah, Brother! Black Sadie never failed to tremble with hope for her cousin. But every year the revival would end, and Quecene remained 'unsaved.' When hope expired, once on the first night of the revival, the proceedings

scarcely begun, the stillness of the massed congregation was shattered by a scream. It was Quecene. She had come through. Praise the Lord!

Every noon Black Sadie heaped a tin plate with pork, potatoes, and cabbage. She carried it into the lean-to to Unc' Roes. It was his dinner. She sometimes lingered for a chat. One day when she returned to the main room of the cabin, she was surprised to see Beau Jim standing close behind Quecene at the ironing-board. He was very close to her, and he was passing his hands all over her shoulders and breasts. Sadie let fall the latch of the door with a loud click. Beau Jim stiffened and dropped his hands from their sensual excursion over Quecene's person. Quecene flung away to the stove for a hot iron. She seemed very confused. Beau Jim swaggered out of the room.

'Well, yer didn't git an eyeful, did yer!' exclaimed Quecene sarcastically.

Quecene's confusion was becoming transmuted into indignation. Sadie was mystified. She did not know what to reply, and, as Quecene put herself more and more on the offensive, Sadie only shook her head and went to

her dish-washing. When she went out in the yard to fling away the pan of dirty water, she saw Beau Jim peeping malevolently at her round the corner of the house. Somehow he seemed nervous and apprehensive.

‘What do yer know, gal?’ he asked combatively, bracing himself.

Sadie was astonished. What was she supposed to know? What had she done to put Beau Jim and Quecene in this sullen mood?

Beau Jim produced his razor, flicked it open, ran his thumb quickly, menacingly down the blade. This gesture was a solemn threat. Sadie understood it well enough. She cast a startled glance at Beau Jim. What had she done to offend him?

‘Well, whatever yer thinks yer know, Miss Peepin’ Smarty, yer damn better well keep yer mouf shet.’ Beau Jim paused. He rolled his eyes till the whites showed and he exposed his hideous blue gums. ‘I’ll slit yer face . . .!’ And he gave the razor a slash through the air. The scar of his own razor wound showed jagged and livid on the black skin of his forehead.

The entire episode was an enigma to Sadie.

Two weeks later, Quecene was washing sheets at the pool in the stream at the edge of

the woods. Aunt Thorry sang loud hymns, ironing within-doors. Sadie went down towards the pool to take Quecene a bundle of linen. She pushed her way through Unc' Amos's corn-patch, pressing aside the tall stalks of corn. Suddenly she caught sight of Beau Jim and Quecene lying together on the ground not thirty feet away from her. They neither saw nor heard Sadie. But at that moment Sadie knew all about everything.

What she had seen was a shock to Sadie. She became sly. She seemed to retire within herself. She had always been quiet and shy, but now a different mood possessed her. She would not let anybody touch her. She kept more than arm's length out of the boys' way. But they seemed unaware of that. Beau Jim never looked at her nor spoke to her, and Quecene tossed her head in a superior fashion in Sadie's presence. Sadie never saw Beau Jim and Quecene together again. They seemed to be enemies. So strange!

Black Sadie brooded much. She was pleased when she noted that her breasts were forming. Her chest began to bulge out gently into two little mounds of black flesh. Now, she felt, she could be haughty and proud. But she only

became more silent and secretive. At the same time other queer happenings in her body disturbed her. Was she ill? Would she die? She broached the matter to Aunt Nancy. That weighty dame shrieked with laughter. But Sadie's mind was set at rest. She began to think she had better 'get religion.'

One day Beau Jim pushed past Sadie in the doorway. Their bodies pressed together. Beau Jim looked at Sadie sharply, quickly, but he shoved his way into the house and said nothing at the time. Nevertheless, after that encounter, he seemed always dallying about the cabin. His eyes followed Sadie wherever she went, but she seemed not to notice. Once he grabbed her arm, the fleshy part above the elbow.

She jerked away. 'Go to hell! I ain't no Quecene. An' I don't give yer nuthin' in no corn-patch.' Sadie's guns were trained.

Beau Jim was stunned. 'You go ter hell,' he spluttered. 'What yer mean 'bout er corn-patch?'

'I'se larose-ketch-medlose' (liable to catch meddlers), said Sadie pointedly.

Beau Jim caught her roughly. 'I'll do what I damn please,' he stuttered, furious, frightened. 'I'll slit yer wide open wid my

razor,' and he snapped open that glittering weapon.

'Will ya let me be?' said Sadie calmly, pulling free of him.

That afternoon, a neighbor who worked in the 'section gang' on the railway, reported to Unc' Amos that he had seen Beau Jim 'hop er freight train goin' west.' And Unc' Amos surmised that Beau Jim 'muster got in trouble.' Aunt Thorry commented, 'One mo' nigger gone to dig coal.' Queer Sister appropriated the battered brown derby hat Beau Jim had left behind. She wore it all the time. It stuck up absurdly on top of her hydrocephalic head, teetering on the brush of stiff, kinky hair.

When Black Sadie was seventeen, a large circus came to town. Aunt Thorry put a plank across two empty barrels, covered it with pink newspaper cut out in notches and diamond-shaped designs, and it was an eating-booth beside the road where the circus crowd milled back and forth. Over this counter she and Quecene dispensed fried meat, bread, and coffee. Trade was lively. Many of the circus 'hands' refreshed themselves there.

One such customer, coming up, grinned de-

lightedly. 'Yes, I'm in de circus now.' It was Lucky Andrew. He smelled strongly of animals and straw, also whiskey. What a surprise! He had been away from home two years. Andrew chatted with Aunt Thorry and Quecene for some minutes. He promised to go home to the cabin after the night performance to see his mother, Unc' Amos, and Unc' Roes. There were many acquaintances to be renewed. Some villainous-looking men called him away to haul on the guy ropes of the big tent. Quecene heard them singing an inspiriting rhythm as they tugged and pulled.

Presently Andrew reappeared at the booth. He wanted coffee. He told Quecene she could hire out, if she wished, as a packer in the dressing-tent of the women. He had heard the wardrobe mistress say she needed a helper. He would introduce Quecene. The pay would be two dollars a day, a sumptuous sum in the eyes of the colored girl. Quecene was eager to go. The glory of the circus! The fascination of the canvas city! And the ring!

So Quecene entered the employ of the mistress of robes. The next night when the circus departed, Quecene went too. Gone! 'Lordy, Lordy!' exclaimed Aunt Nancy. But Aunt

Thorry wept for days. 'I won't never see my chile no mo'!' Black Sadie rejoiced in Quecene's absence, though she felt very sorry for Aunt Thorry. She helped her with the wash.

The Ritchies' ramshackle little cabin seemed empty now: two boys and a girl away from home. Joseph was gone too. He was in jail. It was likely he would go to the State penitentiary in Richmond. He got himself into a serious row the day of the circus, razor-cutting over a crap game. Dave rarely came home. He lived at the livery stable where his ice-wagon horses were put up. Of the boys, Kiddo alone ranged at large; sometimes coming home, usually not. How he lived was a mystery. Life seemed changed for the Ritchies. Black Sadie felt sad at the lowered temperature of the family fortunes.

'Ooman, ya sho' ought ter have some clo's,' remarked Aunt Thorry, scrutinizing Black Sadie. Black Sadie still wore slips, gingham, with a seam around the middle. Passed eighteen, and still slips. The only variation in her costume since childhood was the size of the garments. Unc' Roes called her 'a stringy gal.' For a very long time Sadie's desires had yearned toward shirtwaists. Shirtwaists were

tucked in under a skirt, differentiating the upper and the lower person. They gave 'form.' Sleeves swelling into apses at the shoulders, or sacks at the wrists, were the culmination of her ambition. Quecene wore such, and high, choking collars. Quecene also thrust her fat body into corsets, whalebone cages that made her look flat behind and very bulging above and below the waistline in front. But now Quecene was gone. Aunt Thorry laid away her 'things' in a small tin trunk. The trunk thrust out its tempting, battered nose just one provocative inch from under the bed. Sadie gazed upon it hundreds of times a day. She longed to possess the contents of that trunk, but Aunt Thorry had it locked and always wore the key on a string around her neck. The key reposed somewhere in the capacious depths of her corsage.

Sadie also desired to wear corsets. Now that she had her breasts, she wished to indicate her womanhood by the proper paraphernalia. But the breasts were quite small, not monstrous lobes like Quecene's. Corsets were hardly necessary. And she had no hips. Plainly Sadie was not in vogue; her construction was a misfortune. It was a grief to her. 'Ain't she po'!

commented Aunt Nancy. 'Like er little spar'ow,' said Unc' Roes.

Aunt Thorry called her 'ooman.' That was a compliment in Black Sadie's eyes. At last she felt that she was no longer being regarded as a child. She made bold to ask for Quecene's clothes. Aunt Thorry, in a fit of generosity or maybe family pride, unlocked the little tin trunk. She gave Sadie a blue cloth skirt much worn at the placquet where the safety pins belonged, and two shirtwaists, a plaid one and a faded pink. The clothes were much too large for Sadie. She fell to work 'to make them down.'

Sadie was really very black, but the texture of her skin was smooth and fine. She had small white teeth which she rubbed many times a day with the frazzled end of a twig of apple tree. The most remarkable thing about the girl was her head. It was so high, so flat behind, and set so obliquely on her neck. The shock of crinkly hair exaggerated the savage tilt of the cranium. Her forehead and face came down flat too, just like the back of her head; the eye-sockets, nose, mouth, and chin barely differentiated the foreside of her skull from the rear. Though Sadie's features were small and deli-

cately formed, and her nature seemed fine and nervous, yet her countenance was utterly impassive. Neither grief nor joy disturbed the repose of her mien. Her arms were very long. They terminated in hands small as a child's. Sadie looked anæmic, and her bones frail, but she was very strong indeed and her vitality great. Nothing wearied her physically. She did her work with a dexterity and finish unprecedented among Ritchies.

When Sadie was nineteen she engaged herself to do fine sewing and lingerie washing for Miss Flora Lee. 'She's the only colored girl I'd trust with my things.' The sewing was done in Miss Flora Lee's own bower, under her immediate direction and eye. The laundry was done on the large back porch of the Lee's house. Sadie used Ivory Soap. She soaked the fragile garments for hours, never rubbed nor wrung them out, and she spread them to dry on the flat, clipped top of the garden hedge. The sun bleached lawns and laces satisfactorily.

Miss Flora Lee dressed daintily, according to the rule and precept of 'The Ladies' Home Journal' and 'The Modern Priscilla.' Miss Flora Lee went to 'commencements' at the

V.M.I. and the University (it is superfluous to say 'of Virginia'). She and Mr. Tom rarely saw each other now. They had not quarreled, but Miss Flora Lee considered her horizons wider than Mr. Tom could fill.

Ole Miss thought so too. She had long since abandoned saying to her grandson: 'Tom, why don't you call on sweet Flora Lee?' Mr. Tom did not care to. He felt more at ease with plainer misses. He was inclined to be bucolic. His clay was coarse and his tastes somewhat vulgar. Ole Miss sighed. He would be like his father, dashing, handsome, but out of place in his own caste.

Mr. Tom had a job 'on the telephone.' He installed 'phones in the houses of the town, climbed poles to repair wires or stretch new lines, and 'bossed niggers' planting poles. He wore 'climbers,' steel spikes lashed to his ankles to enable him to scale poles. He dressed in shabby corduroys and wore no collar. A wide leather belt stuck full of appliances girdled his middle and jangled when he walked. On Sundays he wore a blue serge suit, sometimes a light gray (called soda-water), and lounged in the cushioned window of the drug-store. He would not go to church. He would

not be confirmed. Ole Miss and Miss Belle grieved for his soul. Occasionally he would go 'with girls we do not know' (said Ole Miss) to the Baptist or Methodist churches. During the 'long prayer' or the sermon he would scribble remarks of love or humor on the girls' fans. They giggled.

When Miss Flora Lee had been to Commencement at V.M.I. once, and the University twice, she announced that she was engaged and began to make up her trousseau. 'My dear, he's a Yankee!' 'Poor Mrs. Lee!' 'Is the Colonel angry?' — the village commented and exclaimed. It was a universal mystery how a 'Yankee' had got into the University of Virginia, more incomprehensible still that the Richmond and Lynchburg boys had permitted such a 'person' to join their clubs and join in their amusements. 'He' even belonged to The Raven! 'I shall always blame Mrs. Russy Carter,' said Ole Miss. 'She was responsible for Flora. She should never have allowed the innocent child to meet a Yankee.' Mrs. Lee wisely held her peace. When the Colonel was questioned, he remarked that the war was over. But Miss Flora said: 'He is very rich. He lives in New Jersey, near New York, you

know.' 'Better than Vermont or Massachusetts,' conceded the ladies of the town. Sound philosophy!

Miss Flora Lee was invited to visit the home of her fiancé. Sadie worked steadily on new clothes for her to wear 'North.' 'Sadie, here is twelve yards of insertion. It will do for the pink organdie and the white muslin too. These guimpes must have twenty little tucks apiece. Do you think the lace on those fichus is fine enough?' Sadie sewed rapidly with fine little stitches, holding her work on her lap, her knees crossed to make it higher.

It was profitable to work for Miss Flora Lee. The wage was fifty cents a day, and meals. There were also perquisites. Miss Flora Lee gave Sadie delectable articles of apparel, a duck skirt, nothing wrong with it but a mud stain that would not wash out, some percale shirt-waists with four-in-hand stocks to match, and best of all a petticoat with banks of flounces and yards and yards of insertion. She got a pink corset-cover too. Sadie took that from a chaos of clothes a-tumble on the bed in 'Mamma's chamber.' It would never be missed. Beneath Sadie's shirtwaist it would never be seen. She purloined a pair of blue

garters, somewhat stretched from wear, and sundry handkerchiefs, and other little odds and ends of this and that. It was very profitable to work for Miss Flora Lee.

An express package came from Guggenheimer's Store in Lynchburg. Slippers, white canvas, white suède, blue silk. Miss Belle gave 'my dear Flora' a little useful article to use while away, a flowered oilcloth case with two pockets in it edged with tiny pink silk ruffles. In one pocket was a cake of sweet lavender soap, in the other a knitted wash-cloth with pale blue border and the monogram 'FL' in the corner. Black Sadie told Aunt Thorry Miss Flora Lee was as dainty as a 'chick-a-dee-dee.'

Mr. Tom said: 'If that damned, educated Yankee comes to this town, I'll beat him up.' The swains of the drug-store window agreed in the sentiments of Mr. Tom. They were gallant. No strange cocks on their dung-heap. But Miss Flora Lee carried her head very high and would not speak to any of the boys on the street, nor even notice them when she came into the drug-store to buy lavender leaves or cologne. The boys tested her. 'Miss Flora, will you have a lime-ade, or an ice-cream soda?' Temptation. 'No, thank you, I am going to a

tea at Mrs. Harry Semple's.' So haughty! Damn! Let her go then! Girls get so stuck-up when they get engaged. Flora would soon be quite yankeefied.

Colonel Lee employed a colored boy to work the garden and keep the lawn. His name was John Ed, a cheerful mulatto with very large hands and feet. When the Lees had company for dinner, John Ed put on a white coat and served at table. He stood behind Colonel Lee's chair. Sadie stood behind Mrs. Lee's chair. Her duty was to wave flies from the board by means of a long broom of peacock feathers. Sadie and John Ed looked at each other across the mahogany table. John Ed observed her also at other times as she came and went about the establishment.

John Ed belonged to a more self-respecting class of darky than Black Sadie. Her people were referred to as 'cornfield nigger,' but the mulatto boy was classed as 'colored house-servant.' An infinity of difference. But even so John Ed was not proof against the foibles of man. Black Sadie had her charm. She was provocative. The negro bucks began to notice her. She was no longer a child. Her womanhood was apparent. So John Ed lusted for her,

caught in the lure of her feminine suggestiveness. He sought an occasion to speak to her.

One day he looked over the top of the garden hedge. Sadie stood on the other side. She spread handkerchiefs and laces to dry on the flat top of the clipped privet. John Ed essayed to be pleasant, but Sadie sniffed. She would not notice him. But her nearness and the hot silence of the garden excited him. He came close up to the hedge and fixed her with his eye.

‘Sadie,’ he ventured, meaningly, ‘will yer?’ John Ed glanced at her hopefully, slyly. He tried to laugh, but he was too nervous. He had cast his die. His words meant nothing, his tone everything. The black girl could not fail to understand his wooing. ‘Sho’, will yer?’ he said, and waited.

Black Sadie looked him sharply in the face. ‘I’se gwine right straight in dis house an’ tell Mis’ Lee just what you is,’ she said.

John Ed took fright. ‘I ain’t said nuthin’!’ he expostulated.

‘Den keep on sayin’ nuthin’,’ answered Sadie, and marched off.

‘Cornfiel’ nigger!’ John Ed spat in his hands and took up his hoeing with vigor. ‘Slut!’

Now it chanced that the masculine charm of

John Ed had been marked for herself by Vesta, the cook for the household Lee. Her wiles were of little avail. John Ed refused to be lured by them. He feared and disliked the raw-boned vixen in Mrs. Lee's kitchen. The rebuff to her pride was like salt in a wound to Vesta, and when she perceived John Ed and Sadie in converse over the garden hedge, instinct instructed her soul with understanding, filling her heart with the sharp virus of disappointed desire. She became insane with jealousy of Sadie.

Vesta was one of Aunt Nancy's daughters begot at a time when that lady enjoyed an enviable plethora of suitors. In Nancy's own mind there was a certain uncertainty as to her fatherhood. She split the difference and palmed Vesta off on the innocuous Amos. Vesta had a sister named Charity, a year older than herself, and of a much lighter color. But the variant in skin-shades of Nancy's offspring never seemed to Nancy a matter worth accounting for, and certainly Unc' Amos rarely complained of suspicion, though once he had shot at a coat-tail disappearing round the corner of his home. Unc' Amos was black as a coal and Aunt Nancy decidedly sooty, but of

the Ritchie children the lamented Ella alone had possessed the undiluted African complexion of Nancy and Amos. The other children ranged from light yellow to dark brown.

Vesta was dark brown. She was a hoyden of thirty-odd years. She did not live in the Ritchie cabin, but resided in a tumbledown shack of her own. She presumably had a husband, but he was seldom at home. To show for her marital estate Vesta trailed at her skirts three snotty, bow-legged little pickaninnies. They were legitimate by courtesy merely. Vesta bragged that she was beholden to no man. Indeed, she wasn't. She plucked whom she would and drove them away when she wished. And gladly the victims retired. No man would willingly submit to her shrewish ill-temper for long.

Vesta was a good cook. Her moral delinquencies her employers chose to ignore. As Aunt Nancy reigned in the kitchen of Ole Miss, so Vesta held sway in that of Mrs. Lee. Good cooks were hard to find, and a servant who would stay for any length of time in a household was a treasure not to be lightly thrown away. Vesta's kitchen was a filthy place. Mrs. Lee entered there as seldom as possible and

always with a blind eye. Vesta held her mistress in the hollow of her hand. One word, and she gave notice. She injected her strident personality into every corner of her domain. Mrs. Lee preferred to sidestep any issue likely to lead to revolution in the *ménage*.

Vesta became insane with jealousy of Sadie. Her anger and scorn for her niece knew no bounds. The invariable sign of Vesta's high wrath was a black lace hat, dingy, and bent of frame. When out of sorts Vesta hoisted this pennon to the top of her clout-bound head. It trembled there with a menace not to be mistaken by any. So when Sadie tripped in from the snub she had administered to the temerarious John Ed, she found Vesta wearing the black lace hat and flouncing around the kitchen. Vesta sang in a loud nasal voice. She stuck out her great square hips and with brawny arms did havoc in the sink with knives and forks and small tinware. Vesta dashed pots and pans together. Vesta shrieked curses at the blinking, inoffensive cat under the stove, and cried on Heaven to save her soul from all 'brash niggers.'

Plainly Vesta was in a tantrum. Black Sadie could not guess why. She thought it wise not

to tarry in the kitchen. The ringing tones of Vesta's wrath warned her out of the way. Sadie passed by the kitchen door into the house. This action infuriated Vesta. Her prey seemed escaping. 'Come 'er, gal, an' git this dinner,' she bawled after her. But Sadie intentionally did not hear. She had gone into the house.

Vesta pursued Sadie to the door of the back hall. She saw the goods-box turned on end and holding the tub of soapy water in which Sadie had been doing the laundry for Miss Flora Lee. Inspiration came to Vesta. She pitched upon the goods-box, snagging her skirt on a splintered corner. With a snarling oath, she snatched at her rent garment and the tub of water at the same time. The tub tilted over. It rattled resoundingly in its fall. The purly water sloshed forth. It streamed through the door and coursed down the polished length of the hall. Colonel Lee at the same moment entered the house for his dinner. He went down the back hall to hang his hat on the deer's horns behind the dining-room door. The tidal wave caught him about the legs. Vesta saw it. She screamed out her curses afresh, held up her snagged skirt, and plunged into the fastness of her kitchen, slamming the door.

There was a great reckoning. Colonel Lee had to be reckoned with. He was furious. Mrs. Lee had to be reckoned with. She was in despair. Vesta had to be reckoned with. The accident was not her fault. If Sadie had but gone into the kitchen, as in duty bound, Vesta would not have had to run after her to call her back. The hall floor had to be reckoned with; so had the drenched rugs. Dinner was very, very late. And Black Sadie was at fault. She wept as she mopped the floor. It was all her fault. But why? Vesta alone knew.

In October Miss Flora Lee was married. The ceremony took place in the Episcopal Church, a brick affair, four walls, square windows, and a high stoop. On the top was an erection neither steeple nor spire — four wooden cones sticking up in the air from a wooden base. The construction housed the bell, so belfry it was.

The bell clanged when Miss Flora Lee was married. It was nine o'clock at night. The bon ton of the town witnessed the proceedings from within the church; the 'po' whites' and negroes ranged themselves on the outside of the edifice 'to see the bride go in.' Miss Flora Lee drove up with Colonel Lee in a 'hack.'

Inside, the chancel was covered with white, and a white strip stretched down the center aisle for the bride to tread on. Ole Miss's silver candelabra blazed on the altar. The account of the ceremony in the local newspaper said 'the many guests from far and near all wore full evening dress.' The word 'far' had reference to the family of the bridegroom. It was a delicate way to avoid using the term (in everybody's heart) Yankees. New Jersey in the estimation of Virginians differed not at all from Connecticut and New Hampshire.

Black Sadie had special privileges at the wedding. She was permitted to witness the function from the corner of the bulky gallery almost over the head of the wedding party. Sadie swelled with admiration and pride when she saw Miss Flora Lee in her white satin dress and long tulle veil. The train of the dress spread out a full two yards behind the heels of the bride. Sadie was sure she carried off the occasion very well, but Mrs. Lee cried when Miss Flora came down the aisle. The bridegroom was never spoken of as anything but 'Flora Lee's husband.'

Ole Miss and her neighbors were wont to

exchange calls. Ole Miss received them in the parlor. She put on a pair of black kid gloves, hooked her watch with the yards of fine gold chain over her corsage, and pinned on her bosom 'my mourning breast-pin.' The mourning breast-pin was a large enamel oval under crystal. It represented a gentleman in somber black leaning weakly against a funeral urn. It commemorated 'my dear husband.' Unless thus accoutered Ole Miss would not receive callers. Ole Miss moved in the atmosphere and social usages of 1845, the early years of her experience as a matron. Anything else was 'distressingly old-fashioned' or 'shockingly modern.'

Whenever callers arrived, Miss Belle repaired at once to the dining-room closet, from whence she extracted wine and pound-cake, or some other kind of cake. She diluted the wine with water and called it sangaree. She set glasses and some of 'my hand-painted plates' on a silver waiter, then she went into the parlor to 'join the company.' In a few minutes the domestic maid would appear bearing the silver waiter with the refreshments. Thus calls were received by Ole Miss and Miss Belle.

Mrs. 'Colonel' Lee belonged to a much

younger generation than Ole Miss, but she was some years older than Miss Belle. The ladies were attached neighbors and friends, though they treated one another with great formality. When Mrs. 'Colonel' Lee went to call, she carried a parasol with a long handle which had a joint in it so that it could be adjusted to the angle of the sun. She usually wore heliotrope silk. She found that shade becoming to herself: heliotrope and a little white lace. Ole Miss always wore black moirée silk.

Some time after Miss Flora Lee's wedding and departure to live in the 'North,' Mrs. 'Colonel' Lee came to call on Ole Miss. She wished to speak to her about a domestic matter. Ole Miss folded her hands and listened. It was in reference to Sadie. 'She is an excellent servant, my dear,' said Mrs. 'Colonel' Lee. 'But she does not get on well with Vesta. Naturally Vesta is more important to me than Sadie. She has been my cook for years. I could not think of training another.' (Mrs. Lee spoke figuratively. Ole Miss understood.) 'And now that my precious Flora has a home of her own, I do not really need an extra maid.'

Mrs. Lee paused. Old Miss waited. Miss Belle came in with the sangaree and cake. The

ladies deflected the conversation into courteous pleasantries for the moment. Ole Miss ventured back into the track of business.

‘Mrs. Lee was speaking of Sadie . . . Nancy’s granddaughter, you know.’ This to Miss Belle.

‘As I said,’ resumed Mrs. Lee, ‘she is a remarkably good maid, much superior to her origin and upbringing. She is neat. She is respectful. A perfect seamstress and laundress. But she and Vesta CANNOT agree.’ Mrs. Lee brought the tip of her parasol down with a rap. ‘Now that your old Rachel is dead, I thought perhaps you would want a reliable servant to take her place. I recommend Sadie.’

So Black Sadie entered Ole Miss’s employ. It had been long since she had walked those rooms and halls. But she felt entirely at home. She soon proved her efficiency and worth. Ole Miss was relieved. She had hesitated to admit another Ritchie to the big house. Unc’ Roes was gone, but Aunt Nancy still reigned. Ole Miss did not trust Ritchies. She felt that she had run a risk in hiring Sadie. But after Sadie had been there a little time, Ole Miss was relieved. Miss Belle was pleased too. ‘I taught her myself,’ she said, ‘when she was a child. It

is most gratifying to discover that my time and efforts were not wasted.'

When Sadie came into the house, at first Aunt Nancy was pleased, but she soon sensed the black girl's superiority. Treachery! No wonder Vesta had hated her, and Vesta was at pains to prejudice her mother against poor Sadie. 'She's stuck-up,' she said. So Aunt Nancy began to persecute her granddaughter. Sadie never could do anything right in Nancy's eyes. She abused her loudly. But Ole Miss had been won over by Sadie. She closed her ears to Aunt Nancy's maledictions.

Nancy demanded of Sadie the full amount of her wages (eight dollars a month), and when she refused, she threatened to beat her. When Ole Miss was informed, she said that Sadie must not go home to the cabin at night. She might really be hurt. Ole Miss gave her a small room just off the back porch with permission for her to make it her own. A room at the big house! This was distinction indeed! The Ritchie family felt that Sadie had lifted the reputation of the tribe out of the 'cornfield' into the realms of 'colored house-servant,' Envious triumph! They hated Sadie to her face, and bragged about her behind her back. Ole Miss's maid! Black Sadie!

After two years of absence, Quecene came home. Suddenly, unexpectedly. She came on the train. She wore a flappy, soiled 'Merry Widow' hat and a coat with a fur collar. She wore black lisle stockings and vici kid shoes that laced far up her exceedingly stout calves. The heels of the shoes tilted over because they were much worn down on one side. Nevertheless Quecene was impressive. The whole neighborhood was impressed by her. She spoke with an affected voice and tried to roll her *r*'s. She had much to relate. She was married, she said. She was called Mrs. Lowry. She had married one of the negro 'hands' in the circus, but they had not remained with the circus long. 'Mr. Lowry' had got a job as coachman to a wealthy family in 'Easter Orange,' New Jersey, 'way up North.' The people in 'Easter Orange' had white servants. Irish. But the Irish were no good. The 'Easter Orange' people now wanted colored 'help' from the South. The wages were very high, thirty and forty dollars a month! Quecene had come to persuade as many of the colored people in Virginia as she could to go back with her. They would all get jobs immediately, and be just as good as 'white folks.' In the North colored people were free!

Quecene called herself 'a service-agent.' She stayed at home a week. Then she returned to 'Easter Orange.' Black Sadie and two other negro girls went with her. Several more promised to follow.

'The Yankees lure all our best servants away. They tempt them with exorbitant wages.' Thus the housewives of the town. The community was really disturbed. Naturally it had been a Ritchie to disturb it. Ole Miss resented Quecene taking Sadie away from her. Aunt Nancy, with her daughters, Charity and Vesta, rejoiced at the departure of that 'stuck-up smarty.' But soft, affectionate Aunt Thorry wept afresh for her daughter and niece gone 'North.' Unc' Roes gave Sadie his rabbit's foot in the brass socket. 'I ain't never had no luck nohow,' he said. 'You take hit, chile, maybe you kin kunjur fortune.' Queer Sister joined her sobs with those of Aunt Thorry. Black Sadie had gone North!

II

QUECENE and company traveled in the jim-crow car in Virginia; when the train crossed the Potomac River they arose and passed in solemn file into another car where white people were sitting. This was Quecene's maneuver. The girls would never have dared move. But Quecene was now quite worldly-wise. She knew things. She knew this about the cars. In the 'North' niggers and white folks were just the same.

Quecene pointed out the tall shaft of the Washington Monument and the dome of the United States Capitol. Was it snow made the dome so white? Even in September there might be snow "way up North" so far as Washington. Quecene guffawed at the thought: 'Lor, chile, we'se got er long way ter go yit.' How could the world be so big!

How could the world stretch so many miles beyond Virginia! Hours and hours on the train. Quecene sighed wearily. She picked up a newspaper some one had let fall on the floor of the car. Sadie glanced at it over Quecene's shoulder. It was called 'The Police Gazette.'

It was pink. It had pictures on every page. Some of the pictures seemed remarkably frank to Sadie.

At dusk the train reached Newark. What a long journey! Black Sadie felt entirely numb and very dazed. But Quecene stirred her up. Quecene, Sadie, and the two other girls got out of the train and came down into the tumult of Market Street. Quecene led her cohort by devious ways, but with a sure step. They came to roaring, squalid Orange Street and entered a vast ramshackle tenement. The tottering structure was fairly bursting with darkies. They crowded every nook and cranny. They overflowed on landings and stairs. They spilled themselves and their belongings profusely into the street. Men, women, babies, garbage.

Here Quecene resided with her spouse. 'Mr. Lowry' greeted them as they entered. The salutation was a dour look, and a return to his occupation. He was frying onions on a gas stove. Marvel! Sadie had seen water come out of pipes, but fire! Never! Quecene hailed Mr. Lowry with gusto. 'I'se got my gals,' she proclaimed. Mr. Lowry turned on them a blood-shot eye and made a little noise in his throat.

Sadie likened him in her mind to 'er chaw er tobacco,' so brown and twisted and wry was he. He had bow-legs. They were very thin.

Quecene overwhelmed her mate with expansive jocularity. Mr. Lowry was submerged in the flood of her good-humor. His individuality simply flickered out. He could not stand before that tidal wave. No one noticed him again. The news of Quecene's arrival brought in crowds of inquisitive neighbors. They wanted to see her and they wanted to see the girls she had brought with her from the South. Quecene held high court. She recounted her adventures and experiences. She laughed loudly at her own tales and the world laughed with her. She commiserated the 'po' coons back home' . . . 'Ain't got sense ernough ter leave.' She congratulated her visitors, including herself, on being free, 'up-an'-comin',' 'livin' North.' Black Sadie shut her eyes. She had never in her life felt less free than at this moment.

She opened her eyes and looked at Quecene. Certainly Quecene was greatly changed, hardly the old Quecene at all. The days when she did Ole Miss's laundry and flung her anger freely around seemed very far away. She was

so jolly here, so good-tempered. Who had wrought the alteration? Yes, who? Where was her old irascible temper? Ah, where? Quecene prattled on and on. She was showing off. She had been showing off for the last week or ten days. She showed off when she reappeared at home. Now, she did the same thing here. A rare opportunity. Delightful.

In the hubbub, the company coming and going, the two colored girls caught fast in Quecene's net looked awkward and scared. They shrank back against the wall in the shadows. Black Sadie sat by the window. She did not shrink, but she felt very light in the pit of her stomach. The guests examined the new arrivals. They looked them over. They asked them questions and laughed at the stammering answers. So quaint. Lucy and Ann began to cry. Somebody gave them something called doughnuts, bread, sweetish, fried, with a hole in the middle. Sadie ate one too. Not bad.

Quecene said she had a lovely place for Lucy and Ann. In a swell hotel. All they would have to do would be to wash marble floors; not another thing. Easy, she called it. Yes; a cinch. But 'my young cousin,' she would be taken on the morrow to Mrs. Fisher in East Orange.

Mrs. Fisher had already paid the fee. Sadie would be parlormaid; salary thirty-five dollars a month. Well, Quecene had all the plans made. Her good sense was roundly applauded. Out of so much money Sadie could soon pay back the expenses of her trip. She could buy some swell clothes. Oh, the riches of 'Easter Orange'!

Black Sadie went to sleep with her head on the window ledge. She sat on the edge of a rickety chair. The night was very hot. A miasma of smoke, dust, and evil odors filled the air. Stifling effluvia. Sadie closed her heavy eyes. She thought of the fresh clear nights at home . . . and the mountains . . . and the far-away hooting of the trains. That same little moon over the roofs would be looking down on the Ritchie cabin, silver light on the green pokeweeds. Sadie wondered if Unc' Amos were feeding his pigs now, leaning on the top bar of the pen to watch them guzzle the slop. She heard their feet sloshing about in the trough. . . . Aunt Thorry was snoring in her trundle bed beside the sleeping carcass of Queer Sister. But no; it was Quecene asprawl in a rocking-chair . . . snoring. Mr. Lowry was nowhere to be seen. The callers from the other

rooms were gone. Lucy and Ann lay across the bed. Night and sleep in the 'North.' Niggers!

Quecene injected Sadie into the family Fisher just as she had said she would do. The service-agent's fee had already been paid. The family Fisher was a delectable *milieu* in East Orange. They lived on Park Avenue near Brick Church. 'A very wealthy family,' said Quecene. 'Stylish too!' Black Sadie thought she must be a very lucky nigger. Thirty-five dollars a month. Whew-ee! What a lot of money! She would buy some vici kid shoes, like Quecene's, with high tops and laced up all the way.

The Fishers' house was a wonderful house. Sadie admired it highly. Outside, the shingle-pattern of the second story delighted her eye, and she liked the round towers at each of the two front corners. A wrought-iron deer stood between the house and the street. Sadie liked that too. And she loved the plate-glass front door, oval, and the transom and strips of ornamental glass down the sides of the doorframe. The ornamental glass was opaque, like sour milk with streaks of raspberry jam in it.

Inside the house Sadie was intrigued by the

gas range and the gas logs in the blue tiled fireplaces. The furnace was wonderful too. But the bathroom!... 'You just pulled a chain...!' And the tub was white enamel. The 'help' had a 'convenience' of their own in the cellar. It made far more noise than the one upstairs, but it was less easy to hear because of being in the cellar.

The Fisher family was a wonderful family. Sadie admired them all. It took her some time to know who was who. At first she could not understand anything they said, but she soon found the language was like her own, only different. She understood it clearly for the first time when she heard Miss Rosie Fisher talking baby-talk to the canary bird. The canary bird replied with 'Cheep-cheep' a great many times. Miss Elsie Fisher never talked baby-talk to anything, but she took great pains to make Sadie understand. 'Sadie-e-e, shut the door-r-r-r.' 'Oh, de do'!' exclaimed Sadie, light breaking.

Mr. Fisher was a very grand person indeed. He wore frock-coats and shoes with elastic bands up the sides. He rarely noticed Sadie. When he did notice her he called her 'girl.' He ate chips and shavings out of a pasteboard box

for his breakfast. As for Mrs. Fisher, 'she sho' do favor er fish,' commented Sadie, referring both to the lady's appearance and temperament. Sadie did not like the jet ornaments Mrs. Fisher wore. The little black buttons in her ears would never do for her.

There were three boys. Timothy was the eldest. He had buck teeth and heavy gums. And there was a fat one called Rob. Sadie did not like him. He followed her too closely with his eyes. It made her self-conscious. But the real devil was Herb. 'He sartunly do try hisself ter be hateful,' Sadie confided to Quecene.

The round towers at the corners of the house made round alcoves within. They were set about with many windows. In the downstairs alcoves flourished respectively a rubber plant and a cascading fern. Abovestairs, corresponding exactly to the rubber plant and the fern, were two old ladies, one in each alcove. One was Mr. Fisher's mother, and the other was Mrs. Fisher's mother. The two old ladies were invalids. They were also enemies. Fate alone compelled them to live under the same roof. Mrs. Fisher, senior, was sallow and thin. She trembled with palsy and had a bad temper. In her head were two hard brown eyes. Mrs.

Perkins had watery blue eyes, and she did not tremble. She was dropsical.

Poor old ladies confined to the house! Sadie was very sorry for them. She brought them their meals three times a day. They told Sadie how they hated each other. Nobody loved them. Nobody cared whether they lived or died. That was not quite true. It would have been a relief to the rest of the family if both of the grandmothers had died. But Sadie sympathized with them. She said, 'Yes'm, sho' is.' They liked her very much.

Nobody neglected the two old ladies. Mrs. Fisher consulted their wants carefully. She gave them a great deal of her time. She impartially sat in the room of first one and then the other. The sun was in the senior Mrs. Fisher's room in the morning; in the afternoon it was bright in 'precious Mamma's' room. Mr. Fisher came to see them too. He came in state every Sunday afternoon. At other times he 'just looked in': 'All right to-day, lady?' Or, 'The top o' the marnin' to ye, Mither!' Mr. Fisher was so genial. He cheered everybody up.

Every night Miss Rosie Fisher would fly in to kiss each old lady good-night. She sang

as she came, snatches from light operas . . . 'Madame Sherry,' 'The Chocolate Soldier,' or even the old favorite 'Flora Dora.' ('Tell me, pretty maiden, are there any more at home like you?') Miss Rosie Fisher was so very light and gay. Winsome. Miss Elsie Fisher was neither winsome nor gay. She felt life to be a serious affair. She had a class in the Presbyterian Sunday School. But neither her temperament nor her occupation prevented her doing her duty to her grandmothers. She was strict with herself. Once every day she visited their rooms and asked them how they felt. They never felt well, sometimes worse after this acid visit. Black Sadie had great respect for Miss Elsie Fisher. She wanted a tulle boa like hers.

Sadie liked being 'help' and not servant. That was the difference between North and South. A real difference. Herb annoyed her by singing every time he saw her, 'I wish I was in Dixie, Hooray! Hooray!' Then he would say, 'The hell you do, blackie!'

In the service of the Fishers Sadie wore 'maid's uniform.' It was an alpaca dress and a white cap and apron. The cap and the apron were both very attenuated. They had strings

behind. On Sadie's bush of obstreperous hair the cap looked like a bit of paper blown into a tree-top. But she felt very neat, and she was greatly pleased when she overheard Miss Rosie Fisher say, 'Isn't our colored help the cutest thing!' Whatever Miss Rosie Fisher liked was 'cute'; everything she disliked was 'horwible.' Her vocabulary did not possess many more adjectives.

Black Sadie did not sleep in the house of the Fishers. She went down to Newark in the street-car every night. Sadie adored the ride in the cars. They were new to her. She liked to see the automobiles too. They were just beginning to be common on the streets then. They went so fast, so softly, a trail of thin blue smoke spitting out behind. Sadie rented a room from Quecene. The room was very small. It had no windows, only a smudgy skylight. There was a gas-jet over the bed. Light enough.

Quecene took Sadie under her wing. She introduced her to all her friends in the tenement, and she took her to the Star A.M.E. Church. There was society! The church was open every night, not just on Sundays and during revival-times as in Virginia. Quecene said Sadie must 'join the Star Church.' One joined

the church in Newark; one did not have to 'find the Lord' first as in the Baptist Church at home. So Sadie joined. She had to 'pledge dues' at the same time. Star Church was very different from Shiloh Baptist. It was more exciting. There were so many people.

Black Sadie thought Mrs. Fisher looked like a fish. She did. A kind of shad or haddock. Her forehead, nose, and chin taken at a glance described a single arc, and her eyes were on each side of her narrow head. The shape of her mouth completed the simile. When she walked her body wriggled, lithesomely, slowly. Mrs. Fisher certainly looked like a fish. She dressed herself in fishy fabrics and colors too, hard wet grays and damp tan silks. And she wore jet jewelry. Sadie looked in the black lacquer box on Mrs. Fisher's bureau to see if there was any other kind. There wasn't; only jet, necklaces, two bracelets, and some pendants. In the box was a cracked cameo. But Mrs. Fisher never wore that.

Indeed, the family had not much jewelry. Sadie felt deprived of possible opportunities for acquiring trinkets and little odds and ends such as she had had in Virginia. The Fisher

family had few precious adornments for their persons. Rob had a high-school frat pin. He wore it pinned on the extreme lower corner of his vest, where it looked like some tropical insect trying to crawl under his clothes. Miss Rosie Fisher had a silver bracelet hung about with tiny gold and silver hearts. It jangled musically. Miss Elsie Fisher possessed a watch lashed to her wrist on a strap. 'The cutest novelty!' Timothy wore a pin in his tie shaped like the head of a horse entwined in a long whip. None of these articles seemed exactly attainable to Sadie.

On the dining-room mantelpiece stood a more plausible opportunity. Herb's savings-bank. It was a china bank, orange-color, and shaped like a little elephant. There was a slot for coins in the middle of the back, but by some patented contrivance they would not shake out. Some drastic action alone would release the contents. The bank felt most temptingly heavy in the hand. One day Sadie knocked it off the mantelpiece with the handle of her broom as she swept. The bank broke. The coins — pennies, nickels, and dimes — flew all over the place. Miss Elsie Fisher was present at the time. She said, 'Girl, how care-

less!’ In the scramble of picking up, Sadie managed to secrete a few coins for herself, about eighty cents. Mrs. Fisher docked her wages fifty cents to pay for the bank. The candle was hardly worth the price, was it?

Black Sadie stood petrified behind the pantry door. On the other side of the door she plainly heard Miss Rosie Fisher receiving parental rebukes and mandates. Terrible! Mr. Fisher thundered out his paternal soul. Miss Rosie Fisher wept and protested. Black Sadie trembled. And the trouble was all about a swaggering youth from Bloomfield who paid attentions to Miss Rosie Fisher, but after a manner not pleasing to her father.

‘It is unladylike,’ declared Mr. Fisher, shaking his heavy dewlaps. ‘It shall not be said that my daughter is fast. I forbid you to meet young men on Main Street, young men who loiter on the curb, this young man in particular. Receive your company in your own home. You have a beautiful parlor. And I forbid you to sit with any boy on the piazza in the dark. Turn on the door-light. And’ — Mr. Fisher raised an emphatic finger — ‘and at eleven o’clock all callers must go home.’

Mr. Fisher paused. Mr. Fisher rolled his eyes severely. Miss Rosie Fisher sobbed aloud. She could not say a word. Mr. Fisher continued the mandates and rebukes. 'I solemnly forbid you to ride with any boy Lord-knows-where all over the Orange Mountain Reservation in an automobile. These rules may seem hard to you, a thoughtless, innocent girl, but to me, with my experience and responsibility as a father, I judge them indispensably necessary. They must apply to all the company you keep. But as for this Temple young man, he is doubtless well-meaning, but in his circumstances his attentions have little significance. You must return his ring. I do not wish to see it on your hand again. You are not engaged. I will not say you may not wear his fraternity pin, but an engagement ring is out of the question.'

Mr. Fisher's fatherly counsel reverberated through the house. Sadie trembled behind the pantry door. Miss Rosie Fisher wept afresh. The hour was stiff with tragedy and sorrow. Miss Rosie Fisher felt that her heart lay ruthlessly exposed to the probing gaze of every member of her family. That was mortifying beyond words to express. What should she do?

What could she do? Papa was such a beast! Ah, me! Oh, my!

Mr. Fisher let fall one ultimate word, 'This is final!' and stamped out of the house. He repaired to his place of business 'on the other side of Central Avenue,' a lumber yard. On fine days Mrs. Fisher drove Mr. Fisher thither in the family phaëton; on other days, Malcolm, the outdoor man, performed that service. The phaëton came back for the incidental needs of Mrs. Fisher or Miss Elsie Fisher. The boys disdained the antique thing. So did Miss Rosie Fisher. With the single exception of Mr. Fisher, all the family wished ardently for an automobile. 'If we only had a Packard!' But they didn't. Mr. Fisher wouldn't.

Mr. Fisher returned to his business. Miss Rosie Fisher sobbed and stormed in the living-room. She badly damaged a 'throw' on the back of the sofa. The throw was a Spanish shawl. Miss Rosie Fisher wept into the Spanish shawl and twisted it agonizingly in her hands.

Black Sadie crept into the room. She soothed Miss Rosie Fisher. Miss Rosie Fisher was grateful for the comfort. She clung to Sadie and told her all that was in her heart.

‘Sadie, I shall elope with Ned,’ she declared, ‘after Easter.’

Sadie highly commended these bold sentiments. It lacked two months yet to Easter. She took away the rumpled throw and spread it out again on the back of the sofa. Yes; it badly needed ironing.

Miss Rosie Fisher enjoyed her romance. Black Sadie enjoyed it too. She became the poor girl’s confidante. Delightful intrigue. Notwithstanding the paternal temper of the morning, in the afternoon Miss Rosie Fisher dressed herself in her velour dress with the hobble-skirt and fared forth on Arlington Avenue to meet her lover. She told him all the sad affair, and the lover felt desperate. Miss Rosie Fisher made much of the situation. She represented her father as an ogre. He would not permit ‘you’ to come again to the house. He forbade all communication. (Fibber!) Miss Rosie Fisher blushed and gazed on the ground. High romance. Tragedy. Thus the lady pictured herself thwarted in love by a cruel fate. It was most enjoyable.

Truth and falsehood blended perfectly. Miss Rosie Fisher lifted her hand and drew off the ring. ‘I cannot wear this,’ she said. ‘My

father will not allow me to. I cannot be engaged. I must never see you again.' Again she cast down her eyes and the tears began to fall. She truly pitied herself and believed most ardently in her sad plight.

These sentences and pronouncements threw Mr. Ned Temple into a paroxysm of wrath and sorrow. The paroxysm was quite satisfactory to Miss Rosie Fisher. It was all she wished it to be. She dried her eyes and looked into her lover's face.

Of course pretty soon she took back the ring to wear pinned inside her corset-cover. Modesty prevented her naming the garment to Mr. Ned Temple, the garment to which she would attach 'my darling ring.' She said instead, 'Against my heart.' And so they parted. Mr. Ned Temple said he would see her to-morrow and they would drive in his automobile in the Orange Mountain Reservation. Miss Rosie Fisher saw nothing to prevent. The situation was too exquisite!

Miss Rosie Fisher made a little cambric bag in which she sewed Ned Temple's ring. The little bag she pinned inside her corset-cover. 'My precious ring is always with me,' she told her lover. And she told Sadie all about

it, too, and showed her the bag with the ring inside. Sadie was vowed to secrecy.

Several weeks passed. One Monday morning Black Sadie discovered in the wash, securely pinned to the corset-cover, Miss Rosie Fisher's ring. Ah!

At noon or thereabouts Miss Rosie Fisher ran into the laundry. She thought she had forgotten to remove some of the pink ribbons from her corset-covers. She would get them out before the clothes went into the water. The Irish laundress stood aside. Miss Rosie Fisher tumbled the things out on the floor. Sadie came to help.

'Sadie, I have forgotten my ring!'

They searched, but no ring, only pin-holes in the corset-covers. Miss Rosie Fisher was in desperation. Sadie offered many plausible suggestions . . . the pin must have been weak . . . the little bag with the ring might have dropped anywhere . . . on the street . . . in the house . . . where-not. True! Where might it not have gone!

Where indeed? Miss Rosie Fisher could never have guessed the answer to that question, the pawnshop of old Sol Bloom in Newark. Old tricks! Black Sadie!

Star Church in the purlieus of Newark. Several nights a week Sadie went there. Quecene often went too. There were hundreds of church-members. The preacher's name was 'Reverend Rand.' The church was always referred to as 'the plant.' 'The plant' hummed with life. Large congregations listened to the sermons on 'racial uplift' delivered by Reverend Rand. God was rarely mentioned except as the most particular fetish of the 'African People.' He was quite at their disposal.

But the foundation stones of the Star A.M.E. Church were the societies. In them rioted the vitality of the plant. Quecene belonged to several and held many exalted offices . . . First Mistress, Noble and Superfine Lady, Third Dame, Grand Vice-President, and so on. Black Sadie envied Quecene. But she soon joined societies herself. She inscribed her name on the rolls of 'The Sons and Daughters of the Ethiopian Eunuch,' 'The Ladies of the Valley of Israel,' 'The Hope-a-Little Sickness and Death Benefit Society,' and 'The Dime-a-Day Helpers of the Star,' as well as several other lesser organizations for benefit and robbery. Each society had 'initiation.' There were dues proper to each. Ritual and regalia! Black

Sadie was thrilled. Up-to-the-minute was the Star African Methodist Episcopal Church!

Star Church! It was very confusing. Black Sadie felt bewildered in its many cross-currents. She was introduced to the Reverend Rand. He looked down at the top of her head. She stared at the shiny whiteness of his shirt-front. His hand had the grasp of professional cordiality. 'Ah, just from Virginia!' was all he said. That was all the personal contact Sadie ever had with him. She saw him afar in the official distance of the pulpit, sweating, striving with his preaching, praying, extolling the 'African People.' The Reverend Rand was not unctuous. But what was it he lacked, or had? Sadie respected him, but she couldn't fathom him.

It was strange, things of the Star Church. No seeking; no mourning; no repentance. Race! Race! Race! The African People. Was this 'Gospel,' or something else? Sadie hadn't an inkling. The preacher's white shirt-front sometimes stuck out of his vest. It looked like a saucy white tongue, but somehow it did not seem ridiculous. His gesticulating hands moored it again in dock.

In the plant all were 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' and

'Miss.' The more intimate address of 'Brother' and 'Sister' was reserved for fraternal purposes within the bounds of the various societies. The societies had special privileges. Sometimes there would be 'Hope-a-Little' night. And on first Thursdays the 'Dime-a-Day Helpers of the Star' held a rally. And there were lodge funerals. They were styled 'corporate funerals,' not because the membership personnel was dead. No, indeed! But because all the members of the particular society attended in a body wearing the regalia.

The Ladies of the Valley of Israel gave a spider-web party in the church hall. A gigantic spider-web made of string stretched from floor to ceiling. From its bosom extended in great confusion a vast number of threads. Each thread was numbered by a tag at the loose end; the other end led to a prize hung in the meshes of the web. Each ticket-holder had a number. They began at the numbered end of the thread and traced their way to the prize.

At the spider-web party the excitement and the joy were great. Sadie, with some scores of other persons, frantically threaded her way towards the web and the prize. En route her

thread became entangled with another. It belonged to a big black fellow with two rows of gleaming teeth. He had a most engaging smile.

They followed their threads together. When they got to the web, Sadie's thread went up beyond her reach. The man stretched up to pull down her prize. They stripped off the colored paper.

'What's your'n?' he asked, excitedly, like a boy. 'Mine's a hankcher.' And he giggled.

Sadie's prize was a necktie. They exchanged. The big youth gave Sadie some ice cream and a bag of popcorn. They laughed delightedly. Then they danced together. Sadie looked down at her companion's shuffling feet. His shoes were in two kinds of leather, patent-leather lowers, tan-leather uppers, and white glass buttons. Some sport!

'What's yer name?' he grinned at her. 'Mine's Peter; Peter Wright, never wrong!'

How amusing! Sadie told him her name: '... Ritchie, but I'se po' tho'!' The repartee flashed out. Sadie and Peter sniggered immoderately at the witticism.

People began to notice them. Some bouncing mulatto girls tried to lure Peter away, but he wouldn't go. They came around the hall

again, laughing, arm-in-arm, calling to Peter over their shoulders. Quecene rambled by and cocked a discerning eye. Peter bought two of the lollipops from her tray. Quecene lingered. But he wouldn't talk to Quecene. He turned away and took Sadie by the hand: 'Do the cake-walk wid me,' he invited.

Peter put down twenty cents, ten for himself and ten for Sadie. Then they joined the line of contestants for the cake-walk. They won. A large lemon-iced cake. Peter gave it to Sadie. Everything Peter and Sadie did together was successful. What a delightful evening!

Peter walked home with Sadie. He told her he was a postman. He made fifty dollars a month. And Sadie told Peter about the 'swell Fisher family' in East Orange.

'Do yer keep company?' Peter asked.

Sadie promised to walk with him along the canal in Branch Brook Park on Sunday afternoon.

'Whar did yer get dat big black nigger beau!' exclaimed Quecene, when she came in. Sadie was in bed. She heard Quecene, but she didn't answer. There was a quality in Quecene's voice. . . . Could Quecene be jealous? Peter

was a fine-looking man. Now Mr. Lowry had no 'looks.' His size was negligible and he was a most curious shape; besides he was rarely at home.

Mr. Lowry was rarely at home. He was a most mysterious person. As for his being a coachman, or even a team-driver, as Quecene had said, Sadie didn't believe it. He didn't smell horsey, ever. Yet he surely had some occupation because he never asked Quecene for money; moreover, he paid the rent of the flat, and the gas and the water bills. Sadie didn't understand Mr. Lowry. She didn't understand Quecene either, for that matter. Quecene had greatly changed since she 'came North.' She never got into a temper now, though sometimes she seemed a little dour. Mr. Lowry was always dour.

Sometimes he would be at home for days and not stir a foot out-of-doors, sleeping most of the time. Quecene never paid the smallest attention to him. They never conversed. Black Sadie learned to ignore him. He ignored her. Once Sadie heard him ask Quecene if she had 'tried' Sadie. 'Nope,' she answered shortly, and slammed the door.

Callers came to the Lowry door, but rarely to come in. They knocked furtively. Sometimes Mr. Lowry would rouse himself from slumber and go out with them. Sometimes Quecene held a brief parley and would extract something from Mr. Lowry's coat pocket, give it to them, and they would go away. But Sadie was not at home much except to sleep.

Only once did Sadie ever see Mr. Lowry out-of-doors. It was her afternoon off. She came home early. Quecene was in high good spirits. She had just come from a rummage sale where she had purchased a number of fancy things. She advised Sadie to go. The sale was in a vacant store on Summer Avenue. So Sadie went. She bought a purple velvet hat, a pair of white shoes with buckles and high heels, and two pairs of tan drop-stitch stockings. Drop-stitch stockings were much in vogue, silk or not silk.

Black Sadie was quite pleased with her purchases. She came home the short cut through the by-ways above Broad Street. On the way she saw Mr. Lowry. He was relieving himself behind a barrel in an alley near the Westinghouse Plant. On the other side of the barrel stood Ann.

Sadie had lost track of Lucy and Ann. She had not seen them since the night of their arrival from Virginia. They never came to Quecene's flat in the tenement, nor to the social rendezvous of the Star Church. Quecene never mentioned the girls and Sadie had forgotten to ask. Sadie thought Ann looked dreadfully. She had on hardly any clothes, and they were in rags and very soiled. She was worse than a slattern. She looked like a sick bitch that has littered in the gutter.

Sadie pretended not to see Mr. Lowry. She had delicate feelings. But here was Ann shivering against the wall. She stopped to speak to her. But when Ann saw Sadie, she took instant fright and ran away. Up the alley; out of sight. Mr. Lowry cursed vilely, volubly. His position prevented him moving. He tilted himself on his haunches and swore to God. Plainly he was furious at the flight of Ann. But why? What had Ann to do with him? It was puzzling. Black Sadie hastened away.

The very next Sunday afternoon Sadie encountered Lucy. How different she looked from Ann. In the pink of health! In the finest clothes! She had on a white feather boa. She

was walking on Bloomfield Avenue, loitering along, stepping elegantly, holding up her long skirts affectedly in one hand. Sadie had on the purple velvet hat and the high white shoes. She stopped to speak to Lucy.

‘Lars! You must be married,’ she said, looking Lucy’s finery up and down.

Lucy laughed and laughed. ‘I’se lots better’n married,’ she replied. Then she told Sadie a great many intimate and secret things. Black Sadie was appalled.

When she got home it was dark. Quecene lay on the bed cursing. Sadie struck a light. The room showed signs of a bad scuffle. Things were knocked over. Here and there the floor was dusted with a fine white powder. Was it salt? Was it soda?

Quecene mourned and wept. She had a cut cheek and a badly swollen eye. ‘I’ll kill ’at low-lifed stinkin’ little nigger man yet,’ declared Quecene. Did she refer to her husband? Had Quecene and Mr. Lowry had a fight? Almost incredible; such a tame little man!

An Italian plied the block outside the Star Church with a peanut-roaster. He had mustachios like a brigand and his cheeks always

needed a shave. He was quite harmless. The people called him the 'guinea.' The peanut-roaster let off steam in a friendly little whistle. There were some jingling little bells on the handle of the thing. The peanuts were very good. After church trade was lively.

Peter Wright always walked home with Sadie. Invariably he bought a bag of peanuts from the guinea. Peter and Sadie did not talk on the way home. They ate peanuts. The bag lasted exactly to the door of the tenement. Peter never went in. Sadie never asked him to do so. Quecene had tried to entice him, but Peter never warmed to Quecene. He looked sorry for Sadie when he parted from her. Quecene called him a 'stuck-up cuss,' and she looked fractious and was short with Sadie. But Sadie presented to her an always impassive face, expressionless eyes. That nettled Quecene.

Peter made a ring of a horseshoe nail. He gave it to Sadie. Sadie took the ring. She put it on the fourth finger of her left hand as a matter of course. Neither she nor Peter said a word. Quecene said: 'A nice beau you've got! If I had a fifty-dollar fellow, I wouldn't have nuthin' but a solid gol' ring.' But Quecene had no ring of any sort.

One night when Peter and Sadie came to church another Italian stood beside the peanut-seller. He had a grind-organ and a monkey, and the monkey was villainously old and wicked. He sat on top of the grind-organ doffing his little cap at the passers-by. He wore a trailing coat of yellow plush. When the monkey saw Peter and Sadie, he jumped down in a bored way and shambled languidly up to them. The organ-grinder wound out a wheezy tune. The monkey lifted off his cap to Peter and Sadie. They laughed at him and passed into the church.

Inside they met Sanctified Al. His legs were very short and his arms were very long and his feet turned out when he walked. Upon his stunted frame he wore a long yellow mackintosh. His face was stamped in a sanctimonious leer, pious, lascivious. Little globules of saliva oozed out of the corners of his mouth. Drool.

‘Dar’s er real monkey!’ exclaimed Peter. ‘Sho’ is,’ said Sadie, and they both laughed.

Sanctified Al perambulated about the church, traipsing up and down the aisles. His mackintosh trailed after him. The immediate concern of his soul at the moment was gathering a few people to go to sing and pray at the

bedside of a sick woman. He asked Sadie to go.

The sick woman lay in a house on South Street. A miserable bed, ragged, filthy. She neither moved nor spoke. 'Far gone; far gone,' said Sanctified Al. 'Ease her over Jordan, friends. Pray, brother! Sing, sister! Ferry her over Jordan.'

The women began a low rhythmical moaning. Sanctified Al raised his pious voice in prayer. Two or three men joined in the orchestration. The woman on the bed never moved. The praying and singing went on for half an hour. Then came a knock at the door. It was the doctor. Some one brought a light. Black Sadie edged closer. She looked into the ill woman's face. It was Ann. She was dead.

One afternoon Sadie chanced to pass the door of Timothy's room. She sensed a faint odor of tobacco smoke. Now who could be smoking in Timothy's room? None of the boys were at home. Sadie knew that. What more satisfying to curiosity than to push open the door! A light cry escaped the lips of Miss Elsie Fisher. The haze of smoke surrounding her eddied with the cry. What a crisis for her!

Miss Elsie Fisher, so proper, so prim! How meticulously she complied with all the social prejudices and conventional taboos of her day. A model young lady turning old-maid. As her years advanced and her admirers (never many) slacked off, Miss Elsie Fisher's disposition grew tart and her occupations 'serious' . . . Sunday School, Pastor's Aid Society (at the Presbyterian Church), embroidery, china-painting. Useful Elsie Fisher, so strict, so good.

But what of smoking? In the eyes of her world few things would compromise her more. It must not be done. Would Sadie release this scandal to that news distributor, the servant circles of the neighborhood? Could the lady retrieve self-assurance by shutting the mouth of the colored girl? She must try. She did. And the seal of the silence was a dress decked with passementerie plasters. It was well earned. Sadie admired it and so did Quecene. Canny Sadie.

Not long after this episode Sadie laid her finger on the pulse of two other members of the Fisher household, Herb and Rob.

'Yo' pa'll be mighty mad ef he ketches yer shavin' wid his razor.' Sadie had caught Herb

in an adolescent experiment, and Herb feared parental anger. He cajoled Sadie. 'Sadie, don't you say anything about it, will you? I'll give you fifty cents.' The compact was made. And Sadie showed Herb how to hone the razor when he had done. Thereafter Herb ceased his pastime of teasing Sadie.

Rob met Sadie on the back stairs. He barred the way. Unmistakable! Sadie was amazed. What, this fat, sluggish boy! But she had a card up her sleeve for such a game with Rob. She played it. It was excellent finesse. 'I knows 'bout you an' Irish Minnie,' was all she said, fixing Rob with a meaning eye. The person referred to had recently lost her job because she was going to have a baby. Nobody knew whose. Sadie did not know either, but she ventured a guess and the guess hit the mark. Rob blenched. He fled away from Sadie. Sadie smiled. Rob never molested her again.

Sanctified Al perambulated the Oranges. He pushed before him a curious machine and rang a little bell. He was a scissors-grinder. He called at every door. Few people had scissors to grind. Those who did regretted it later. But if Al ground no scissors, he found

his journeyings profitable. At every door he begged for small change for this and that and thus and so . . . 'Help the po' colored man in his work for God,' he said. Many were touched and gave him nickles and dimes. Business was not bad.

Sanctified Al came to the door of the Fishers. It was the back door. Sadie opened it. Al was surprised to see Sadie and Sadie was surprised to see Sanctified Al. Inquiry brought forth no scissors for Al to hack. Disappointing. He produced a soiled square of thick cardboard covered with transparent celluloid. Under the celluloid were indentations forming a star. Each indentation would hold one dime. The completed scheme would make a silver star.

'Maybe the folks would give me a dime for my card?' queried Sanctified Al. The saliva bubbled in the corners of his mouth. Sadie noted his blue gums and snagged yellow teeth. She was dubious, but she took the card. She carried it from room to room, but nobody would contribute to Sanctified Al's card except the two old invalid ladies. They did so because they were superstitious. Mrs. Fisher said: 'Sadie, do not encourage beggars.' 'Yas-sam,' said Sadie. She kept one of the dimes for

herself, and one she left in the card. Sanctified Al shuffled off.

Ten days later Sanctified Al reappeared. He was selling oranges. Mrs. Fisher bought some oranges, and Sanctified Al asked for a quarter for a colored children's home. But he did not get that. In another week he came riding in a rickety cart. He wanted rags and old newspapers. The cart was hauled by a flea-bitten mule. Al quavered a strange song and cry as he drove about the streets. Mrs. Fisher told Sadie to take him into the cellar to gather the piles of tattered newspapers near the furnace. Sadie gathered her skirts about her, took a long sharp kitchen knife from the table, and accompanied Sanctified Al below. He wanted to ransack the garret also. Sadie did not approve of this suggestion. She told him the garret was bare. It would be no use for him to go there.

Sanctified Al sat down on an upturned box. He seemed loath to depart.

'Nigger, what you comin' 'round here so much for?' asked Sadie. 'I'se got mer eyes on yer.'

'I'se got my eyes on you too,' said Sanctified Al. He began looking in his pockets for something. 'Youse a good gal,' he remarked.

The adjective might imply a number of things. Sadie felt nervous. She picked up a bundle of papers tied together. 'Tain't no use staying down here,' she said. 'Git them two bales er papers an' come on.'

At the cartside Al seemed to have found what he had been searching for downstairs in the cellar. It was not a begging card or contrivance. It was a little blue envelope, rather soiled. Al pulled out the flap. 'Dis here snow,' he said, 'is mighty good stuff. An' dere's money in it too.' Al glanced interrogatively at Sadie. She did not understand. He saw that. 'Take er whiff,' he added, holding up the paper. But Sadie would not smell the powder. 'The Good Lord knows I don' mean you no harm,' said Al.

The cook called out of the window to Sadie. She left Al abruptly. Sometime later she looked out again. The cart and the mule and Sanctified Al were still at the back gate. Al seemed to be studying a little book. Then he was eating something. Later he rearranged the contents of the cart. Finally he drove off quavering his song and his cry. When he was well out of sight, Sadie asked the cook if she knew what 'snow' was. The cook looked hor-

rified. 'It's poison,' she answered. 'I thought so,' said Sadie. Now she knew what caused Ann's deterioration and squalid death. Sanctified Al and Mr. Lowry, she would keep a wary eye on them.

Sadie thought she would ask Peter about this 'snow medicine.' Peter told her it was 'dope' and never to touch it. Sadie did not know what dope was, but she resolved never to touch it. She recalled Ann's dead face. It filled her with fear. Sanctified Al did not appear at the Star Church for several weeks. He was ill, people said. And Sadie was sure she knew why.

Festivity ran high when Mr. Fisher entertained his lodge. Once a year the noble and exalted and past-exalted rulers and potentates with their wives and daughters came to a 'fraternal reception' at the home of the Fishers. The whole household came into play for the occasion. Mrs. Fisher wore a dress covered with sequins which made her look more like a fish than usual. Scales and fins. The two young ladies poured tea and coffee, and the young gentlemen handed plates of ham, salad, and green peas to the company. Black Sadie

served from the pantry, peeping through the swinging door for glimpses of the elegant assemblage. The 'outside man' came inside to take the hats and coats of the gentlemen, and a 'by-the-day girl' attended to the wants of the ladies.

The wants of the ladies were attended to upstairs. For that one evening in the year the two old ladies had to sit together in the same room. Mrs. Perkins's room was needed for the dressing-room of the female guests. The two old ladies looked forward to this day. It gave them exceptional opportunities to whet their hate for one another. They could also abuse the family in an uninterrupted *tête-à-tête*.

Before the first guests arrived, Mrs. Perkins was convoyed across the hall into the elder Mrs. Fisher's room. It was a delightful grievance to her 'to be put out of my own room.' The elder Mrs. Fisher complained of having people 'thrust upon her.' No better opening for a quarrel could be imagined. Hungrily the two old ladies seized the opportunity.

But before many verbal darts had had time to fly, Miss Rosie Fisher skipped in to kiss 'dear bumsey' (short for 'big mumsey') and

do the same for 'b'l'air' (which must be imagined to stand for 'belle mère,' the name for the elder Mrs. Fisher which the younger Mrs. Fisher used when she did not want the servants to know whom she meant). Miss Rosie Fisher had so many pet endearments for her grandmothers.

When Rosie had done her devoirs to the two old ladies, she went into the hall to cover the cage of the canary bird with a green cloth. The cage hung in the window surrounded by lace curtains and ribbons. Miss Rosie Fisher lingered a long time at the cage conversing with her pet. She said, 'Izzy seepy? Wanter go by-by?' And the canary bird said, 'Cheep-cheep' as usual.

The two grandmothers observed Rosie in the hall. They heard her prolonged endearments with the canary bird. They were very jealous. 'She loves that bird better than she does me,' wailed forlorn Mrs. Perkins. 'The bird loves her better than you do,' retorted the elder Mrs. Fisher, smartly. 'Anyway, she knows you hate her,' snapped back Mrs. Perkins. 'Don't judge other people by yourself,' thumbscrewed Mrs. Fisher.

So Mrs. Perkins felt very hurt. The other

old lady felt very angry. Murderous old females dueling together.

Downstairs the guests chattered 'lodge shop' and ate the abundant supper. A fair miss manipulated a ladle in a punch-bowl. The bowl had to be replenished a great many times. Mrs. Fisher swam about among her company entirely happy. Mr. Fisher moved jovially from group to group. The noble and exalted and past-exalted potentates and rulers of Mr. Fisher's lodge crushed themselves together in the hot rooms and thought they enjoyed themselves very much. So also thought their wives and daughters.

Upstairs the two old ladies quarreled and dozed. Despite the green cloth cover, the canary bird would not go to sleep. 'Cheep-cheep'; perpetually; 'cheep-cheep.' The twitter annoyed Mrs. Perkins. She wished the bird was dead. But the canary was much alive. Mrs. Perkins looked at the elder Mrs. Fisher asleep in her chair, her palsied hands still wobbling. That annoyed Mrs. Perkins also. She wished the elder Mrs. Fisher was dead. But she wasn't either. La, la; what could an old dropsical woman do to make the time go by?

Mrs. Perkins scanned the slumbering countenance of the elder Mrs. Fisher. Nauseating old fowl! The peeping of the canary bird pricked her nerves like a pin. Mrs. Perkins scanned the open door and the hallway. The by-the-day girl had gone downstairs for some supper. The only two living things awake on the upper floor were Mrs. Perkins and the canary bird. Mrs. Perkins hoisted herself out of her seat and lumbered into the hall. Mrs. Perkins aspired to be helpless. One got more attention if one were helpless. But at this moment there was no one to see whether she was helpless or no. Mrs. Perkins lifted the green cloth cover off the bird cage. She glared weakly at the small yellow thing hopping nervously about from perch to perch. She looked at the bird a long time. On the window-ledge lay a bit of string. Mrs. Perkins eyed the string. Then she eyed the bird. Then she made a noose in the string and dangled it through the bars of the cage. The canary bird was soon dead. Mrs. Perkins withdrew the string, recovered the cage, and turned herself around.

Mrs. Perkins turned herself around to creep back to her chair. Her eyes looked into those of Black Sadie. Black Sadie stood on the

stairs, just her face appearing above the edge of the floor. Mrs. Perkins let out a low moan. 'Sadie, come and help me. I wanted to go to the bathroom. I called and called, but nobody paid any attention to the distress of this old woman.'

Mrs. Perkins sank heavily into her chair again. Opposite her, fast asleep, sat the elder Mrs. Fisher. Mrs. Perkins's hands trembled as badly as those of the palsied woman. 'Sadie,' she whispered, 'I could not stand that bird another minute. I hated it.' The old lady reached in her bosom and took out her purse. Sadie saw it was crammed with bills. 'Sadie, no one must know; just you and I,' and Mrs. Perkins extracted a dollar. 'Five dollars,' said Sadie, holding her hand towards the purse. 'Yassam, 'tain't nobody goin' ter know 'cept we two.' The spring in the trap hurt, but the poor old lady was fairly caught. As a matter of fact she would have paid any price rather than have her little escapade known. Sadie held her in the hollow of her hand.

In the morning Miss Rosie Fisher discovered her canary bird feet up on the floor of the cage. Cause of death unknown. The poor child was inconsolable. Many tears, and they were part

sentimental and part genuine grief. She had loved her bird. She buried him in a shallow grave in the back yard. Sadie cleaned out the cage and stowed it away in the garret.

Like the Day of Judgment, a new heaven and a new earth when least expected, came a day of wonderment and ecstasy for the Fishers. No previous warning, not the least inkling, complete surprise!

The phaëton went as usual to fetch Mr. Fisher home to lunch. But the phaëton did not return. Instead a Packard car swept round the corner and halted at the iron horse-head hitching-post. Mr. Fisher leapt out of the Packard. The phaëton was no more; sold to the junk dealer. The horse was no more; no one even inquired of the fate of ancient, faithful Susie. And the lumber yard was no more; converted into the automobile business! What shrewdness in Mr. Fisher! A future fortune lay in automobiles. What a secret he had kept!

The Fisher family throbbed with astonishment. The Fisher family pulsed with joy. And they all went to ride. Immediately, all the afternoon, the Packard did jitney service

for the Fishers. So swift, so smooth, pneumatic tires, and a mechanic from the garage to drive. Even the two old ladies, who had not been downstairs for over a year, were bundled up, hauled below, and taken for an airing in the Packard. Sadie drove in the Packard. Cook drove in the Packard. The outside man drove in the Packard. The Fishers were beside themselves. 'Our marvelous new "machine"!'

The automobile revolutionized their life. Mr. Fisher, Timothy, and Rob learned to drive the car. Mrs. Fisher went to Newark to market and shop. Miss Elsie Fisher entertained segments of her Sunday School class from time to time by taking them to drive. It was cheaper and less messy than ice cream. The two old ladies wished to go out every day. They were quite rejuvenated. And Miss Rosie Fisher determined to postpone her intended elopement, at least she would not surprise Mr. Ned Temple by springing the idea on him just yet.

An automobile is a great thing!

There were many surprising and delightful things in the North. Black Sadie enjoyed life

very much. So much to see. So much to hear. And many things to do.

The Fishers' 'Victor Victroler' was a miracle of the first magnitude. Real human voices, real music, all on one round plate. The younger Fishers played the 'Victroler' a great deal. Sometimes they danced. Sadie loved to hear the music and she loved to watch the dancing . . . waltz, two-step. When the elders were not present to prohibit, the young people ventured wickedly into the new dances . . . one-step, fox-trot. Some had such droll names . . . the bunny hug, the bear walk, and the dip. Miss Rosie Fisher learned all the 'cute' new steps. Sadie learned them too, in private, behind the pantry door.

In Newark there were moving-picture theaters where colored people might go. Sadie went with Peter. It was better than church. The price of a ticket was only fifteen cents, some places, ten. Inside it was dark. A mechanical piano pounded gayly. But the pictures, they actually moved! Just like life. And such deep and dangerous mysteries, such escapes, such tender scenes, such jokes on the screen. When the picture show ended, Peter and Sadie would go out for something to eat . . .

hot-dogs, coffee and sandwiches, ice-cream cones.

Once Peter took Sadie into an eating-house near Market Street station. He called it a 'Yidd joint.' Peter handed Sadie a greasy card. 'What's yer choice?' he said. The printed words on one side of the card Sadie could not read at all. On the other side they were equally unintelligible, though the type seemed all right. However, it must all be food. At the top of the card Sadie saw a word in large letters. That would be the principal dish. So Sadie said she would have some 'Kosher.' Peter laughed very much and so did the man across the counter. Peter ordered her some gifiltha-fish, and she liked it well enough.

Rally and revival at the Star Church. Crowds of people came every evening. The large auditorium was packed with darkies and religion. The meeting was well organized. The Reverend Rand acted as chairman and leader. He had two specially invited assistants, Reverend Tolley from Harlem, Reverend Smithy from Elizabeth. They worked hard at the revival, relieving one another. Preaching is exhausting labor. At the end of the week there

would be a 'drive' for new members. The societies hoped for replenished rolls also. But the real objective of the revival was fifteen hundred dollars.

The Church was decorated with flags and festoons of ornamental paper. The lodge called 'The Ravens of Elijah' furnished a band . . . drums, clarinets, and a monstrous tuba. The band sat on a specially improvised stage draped with purple and green bunting. Opposite them, on a similar stage swathed in red and yellow, swarmed a large chorus. The chorus was inspired by an energetic cheer leader. The Star Church did not do anything by halves.

Sanctified Al was much in evidence. He was beside himself with self-importance and happy interest. He wept when the mulatto soprano sang 'The Ninety and Nine.' He wore his long yellow mackintosh. The mackintosh was his official vestment. He never did anything *sans* the mackintosh. Sanctified Al threaded the aisles . . . up one, down another. 'Brother, are you saved?' 'Sister, let us pray.' He was quite in his element. He testified. He exulted in the Lord. The saliva was plentiful at the corners of his mouth.

Mr. Lowry also went to the revival. He was a marshal with a red-and-white ribbon across his chest. And Quecene was there, in the chorus. She sang finely in a strong, throaty contralto. Peter Wright was in the band. He blew a fife. Sadie saw Lucy across the hall. Lucy did not belong to any of the lodges, so she sat in the unreserved seats with visitors and hangers-on. Lucy was very much dressed-up . . . white and yellow chiffon, and a chiffon hat. She had a long feather fan. People looked at Lucy curiously. But little did she mind being conspicuous. She liked it. Her spirits were high and gay. After the services crowds of young men assembled around her at the door. The revival furnished good business opportunities for Lucy.

On the fifth night the revival rally reached its height. It was a great success. Sadie came to the church directly from East Orange. There wasn't time to go home. She put on the white-and-green cloak proper to the Ladies of the Valley of Israel. They marched into the church in a body. All the societies did. A resplendent marshal piloted each group. Mr. Lowry led the corps to which Sadie belonged. As they came down the aisle, Quecene waved to

Sadie from the chorus box. That was amiable of Quecene. Sadie felt that the dignity of the moment forbade a return of the sisterly salute. Her eyes ran over the ranks of the band. Peter's chair was empty.

Mr. Lowry led the Ladies of the Valley of Israel to their allotted seats. All the Ladies of the Valley of Israel sat down simultaneously, at a signal from the marshal. Sadie sat down. She was on the end of the row of chairs. She looked through the hoop of Mr. Lowry's bowed legs as he returned up the aisle. The 'Eyetalian' monkey could give a fine entertainment jumping through those legs. The thought amused Sadie.

The Reverend Rand stepped forward to the edge of the platform. He held up his hand. The time to open the meeting had come. There was a hush. The marshals retired to the back of the church. Sadie saw Sanctified Al scramble in through the bandmen's door. He beckoned to Mr. Lowry. Mr. Lowry went down the aisle again and Sanctified Al hustled to meet him halfway. He seemed very perturbed. He slobbered liberally. Sadie saw him whisper something to Mr. Lowry. Mr. Lowry said something to him and Sanctified Al went

out through the bandmen's door again. He seemed in a great hurry. The yellow mackintosh blew out behind him.

The choir stood up. They began to sing. The drums beat a heavy rhythm. Mr. Lowry made his way to the chorus box. He held a short colloquy with Quecene, and Quecene left the box with Mr. Lowry. They did not return. Sadie did not see Sanctified Al again either. Soon she forgot all about them.

The services continued. The power of the revival captured Sadie. She was sucked into its vortex of rhythm and emotion. It was very exalting. She enjoyed it. The band played great swashing melodies in march tempo. They played soul-stirring spirituals too. Sometimes the choir sang with the band, sometimes without. The Reverend Rand surpassed himself. So did the other ministers. They preached 'Christ for the world,' meaning in particular the 'African People.' Most likely Christ had been a colored man. The congregation were disposed to think so too.

The people in the Star Church were carried to exceeding great heights that evening. Such a successful rally revival. When Sadie came out to the door, she looked about for Peter. He

had not been in the band, but he never failed to meet her at the door. No Peter. All at once the tension sagged. Sadie felt depressed. Most of the people had already gone away. The Italian with the monkey jerked the leash and the little animal jumped up and down indifferently, sleepily. But Sadie paid no attention to his feeble capers. She did not look at the peanut-man either. She turned away to go home by herself.

Sadie walked down Central Avenue. When she crossed High Street, Peter met her. He had on his postman's uniform and slung on his shoulder the leather mail bag. 'Zat you, Peter?' she exclaimed, startled. How unexpectedly he had come out of the dark right beside her. 'Z'me,' he answered. He touched her arm and they walked south on High Street.

Peter would not let Sadie go home to the tenement. The police had been there, raiding. It was a bad house. The 'wagon' had taken a number of men and women out of it to jail. The police were drawing a dragnet over the whole neighborhood. Worst of all, they were looking for the Lowries. In Sadie's room, under the mattress on her bed, they had found

a cache of dope, 'snow' mostly. But the police could not find out the name of the tenants of that flat. The people in the tenement had behaved very well. They would not 'peach' or 'squeal' on the Lowries. They would not tell the names of any of the people the police asked about, inventing fictitious names. Really, they knew nobody.

Black Sadie was thunderstruck at Peter's tale. Evidently Mr. Lowry and Quecene had got wind of the raid and escaped. Sanctified Al too. But what a 'low-lifed' trick for Quecene and Mr. Lowry to play on her, hide their dope under her bed. She would never have suspected it. But Peter thought she would be safe enough unless the Lowries were apprehended and tried to 'pass the buck' to Sadie. But they had escaped. Sadie hoped they would not be caught.

But Peter said she must not go back to the tenement. He would look after her. She must come home with him. He lived by himself in a rooming-house 'down Neck' (a part of South Newark). The time had come to 'hitch up' together. So Sadie went home with Peter. Peter was hers now.

Two days later, Peter and Sadie moved from

the room 'down Neck' to Harrison. By some means Peter had got all of Sadie's effects from the tenement. The flat was vacant. Mr. Lowry and Quecene . . . nobody knew where they had gone. The police were still looking for them, but they were well hidden. Peter told Sadie not to go near the tenement. They did not put in an appearance at the Star Church either for several weeks. Every day Peter got up early to 'take his route,' and Sadie went to the Fishers as usual. When they got home at night, they had each other. No further need of diversion.

Was Black Sadie married to Peter? She wasn't sure. She lived with him, and Peter would say to his friends, 'Meet my wife.' Sadie asked Peter if she could call herself Mrs. Wright. Peter said: 'Sure, I don't care.' He wanted her to change her name to Lily or Pearl, but Sadie wouldn't do that. Peter said when he got his summer vacation he and Sadie would go to Tarrytown and have a wedding. So Sadie looked forward to that.

Now that Sadie lived in Harrison, she ceased to use the street-cars on Orange Street. She took the D. L. & W. train every night, Brick Church to Harrison. Once at the Newark

station Sadie spied Sanctified Al from the car window. He was below the tracks, sitting on an upturned oil tin, watching some boys playing ball in a vacant lot. Sadie was glad he couldn't see her. She told Peter about it. Peter said: 'That nigger sure is sanctified. Can't nuthin' tetch him.'

In May Halley's Comet appeared, feeble and far off. The astronomers said, on the contrary, it was quite close to the earth, comparatively considered in sidereal space, and they set dates for the earth to be swept by its luminous tail. People believed all the astronomers said, and they invented many other things to believe about the comet too. The lay mind. Some religious quacks announced the end of the world. They sat up at night and looked at the comet. Many other people too sat up all night and looked at the comet. But they were not religious quacks. They were people having 'comet parties.' A novel idea.

Some friends of the Fishers in South Orange gave a comet party on the night of the comet's closest proximity to the earth. They called it the end-of-the-world party. The entertainment was so ordered as to carry out that

stimulating thought. The guests wore mourning. The decorations were black and white. The tables were shaped to look like coffins. And the things to eat . . . deviled ham, deviled eggs, 'damn sandwiches,' angel-food cake, 'salvation ice cream.' Miss Rosie Fisher thought it all the 'cutest' thing.

Miss Elsie Fisher was not invited to the party, most inconsistently with the theme of the occasion, because she was 'such a crape-hanger.' Timothy drove Rosie and himself to South Orange in the family Packard. Mr. Ned Temple was there too. He and Rosie put her black veil over their heads and declared they would die together. Instead they kissed. So naughty. It was a scream, those two!

The guest of honor was a peroxide blonde from New York. Her lips were so red that her teeth looked yellow. Her name was Constance. So gay, so droll. She was the life of the party. The boys and girls were in fits of laughter. She taught them a new way to dance. Shimmy. Constance said she had just learned it the night before at the Yale 'hop' at the Hotel Astor. She danced it first to show the others how. 'The end of the world makes me all nerves,' declared Constance, 'hence I shimmy.'

Shocking! But so daring, such fun. They all tried it and laughed very much.

Timothy Fisher bared his buck teeth and asked Constance to dance. He was astonished to find that she wore no corset; no whalebone ramparts between his hand and the girl's back. Doubtless something new and advanced in female styles. But disconcerting to a Fisher. Timothy had inherited the best ideals. Constance clung to him. She gazed into his eyes. She told him she 'adored' dancing with a 'grown man.' The other boys were 'just kids.' She said he danced 'divinely.' Timothy was greatly flattered. He listened eagerly. Constance said she had been told that he was a marvelous business man . . . successful . . . making a fortune in the automobile business. But she said she didn't care about money and she would think him the nicest man in the world if he hadn't a cent. Timothy warmed to the praise. He displayed palisades of teeth.

Midnight! The end of the world! How to celebrate it? Lights out and a fox-trot? Constance had something more daring. They must all 'ride to the end of the world' in automobiles. What a pun! The witty creature! Timothy said he could take five in the Packard.

Constance screamed when she saw the Packard. She positively refused to ride with the animals in Noah's Ark. She leaned against Timothy, and said: 'Can't you get a two-seater just for thee and me?' What could Timothy do but play up to this daring suggestion? Off to the Fisher garage he posted and was soon back in a high-powered two-seater. Constance stood on the curb waiting for him. The others had gone.

Timothy drove at breakneck speed. Constance said she 'adored' fast drivers. They came to Morristown. Constance wanted to dance at the Inn. But the waiters were closing up. Timothy said it must be rather late. Nearly two o'clock. Time to return. The automobile was turned towards South Orange. So late, so far.

Constance said she felt cold, so Timothy put one arm around her, driving with the left hand. She snuggled close to him. She put her head on his shoulder. He kissed her. Expected. Intoxicating to Timothy. She called him 'my comet lover . . . into my sky to-day, out to-morrow.' Timothy whispered: 'I never want to be without you.' Gallant if banal. Constance said: 'You make my heart beat . . . so!'

She took his hand to lay against her heart. But between the hand and the heart was a warm, soft, round breast.

The girl's warm, firm breast. Timothy trembled so he stopped the car. Constance let him put both arms around her. 'What do we care?' she whispered. 'It's the end of the world, anyway. Let's get married . . . now!'

Timothy was as befuddled as infatuated. Married? What?

They drove to Montclair. Constance would not let him so much as touch her all the way. What a strange girl! What a tantalizing creature! The end of the world! They drove to Montclair. They routed out the town clerk for a license. They called from his bed a drowsy Baptist minister. Married!

Timothy and Constance stood on the curb outside the blind-looking front of the parsonage. 'Now what?' asked Timothy. What now? He felt utterly bewildered. Day was breaking. The end-of-the-world party must be over. Quite over. What reckless foolishness had he and this strange girl committed? Married! Appalling fact! Timothy felt ill and weak. Married! What madness! What now?

Sadie and Peter lived in Harrison, across the river from Newark. They were very happy together. She made Peter a good wife. Kept his clothes in order. The bed was made every day before she left to go to East Orange and the home of the Fishers. Sadie was more comfortable than she had been in the tenement in Newark. The den she slept in there had not been luxurious. Her wages with Peter's made excellent living.

Sadie had every other Thursday afternoon off. These she devoted to Poro — not a game, but laborious hair-straightening. She went from 'method' to 'method' . . . Madam Clare's, Jackson's, All-Straight, Madam Wolley's. Sadie's hair was very thick. It was also very tough. Sadie's hair defied to be straightened. Poro was a failure.

Then she heard of a new 'method' — Madam Ritchie's. The name attracted her because it was her own. She sought the address. It was in a back street east of Broad. In the window stood two forms, heads; one with a mop of incorrigible kinks upon it, the other with the smoothest, most elegant coiffure. 'Madam Ritchie's Method' was printed in gold letters on the door. Sadie pushed open the door.

A little bell tinkled when Sadie entered Madam Ritchie's establishment. The room was divided into two parts by a white cotton curtain. The front part contained two wicker chairs and a small table with some smudgy magazines upon it. The white cotton curtain was pulled aside. The other half of the room contained Quecene!

Quecene and Sadie were very surprised to see each other. They chatted like sisters. Each felt that she could afford to let by-gones be by-gones. Quecene said she and Mr. Lowry were divorced. She did not know where he had gone. She cared less. He had always got her into trouble. Her Poro business was very good, and she had other ways, too, of making a living. She owned the house and let rooms. Sadie told Quecene she was married to Peter Wright and lived in Montclair, which wasn't true. But Sadie was shrewd. She never went to the Star Church now. Quecene did not go either. She was learning astrology and did not need church. Her 'Circle' was on a higher plane than church. Why didn't Sadie learn Poro and astrology? Sadie said she didn't know why, and then she said good-bye, and the visit came to an end.

Never had the Fisher family been thrown into such consternation as when they learned of Timothy's marriage. It was Sadie, just come into the back door, who answered the early telephone call from Timothy. Timothy's voice trembled as he explained things to Sadie. It was Sadie who packed his suitcase and slipped it out of the living-room window to Timothy below. The two-seater and Constance waited around the corner. East Orange still slumbered. It was Sadie who entered each separate room of the Fishers to rouse them with the announcement: 'Mr. Timothy's done runned away. He's married!'

In bathrobe and dressing-gown the Fishers assembled together in the upper hall. But they could learn nothing else from Sadie. She had told them all she knew on the subject. Married! Timothy! The two old ladies called piteously from their respective beds to know what it was all about, the family conclave. Later in the day the Fishers discovered more of the enormity of Timothy's crime. He had run away with the Harcourts' guest. He had seduced the innocent, lovely girl. He had stolen one of the 'firm's' automobiles. He had gone away nobody knew where. He

had utterly disgraced the family. He must be an outcast Fisher henceforth and forever.

Constance had neither father nor mother. She lived with a canny maiden aunt in New York. The news of the marriage encouraged the old lady mightily in her heart . . . a rich automobile dealer's son . . . outwardly she wailed and threatened lawsuit against Timothy Fisher.

In two days Timothy came home. Constance came too. Stormy scenes in the home of the Fishers. Constance said: 'What could I do! I had my good name to protect. Your son owed me marriage for the advantage he took of me in the automobile.' Sympathy was wholly with Constance. Lovely, sinned-against child. Timothy must stand to his bargain. Nothing in his own favor that Timothy said was believed. Poor Timothy. He was in very hot water.

Although Sadie's marriage had been as casual as Timothy's . . . on the spur of the moment . . . it was nevertheless far more satisfactory. Sadie and Peter had 'kept company' for some time. Their mating was no surprise to either of them. On the contrary, expected. Sadie asked Peter if he didn't think she ought

to be having a baby. But Peter said: 'Not yet; I'se careful wid yer, Sadie.' Peter had to explain that more fully. Black Sadie was astonished. She had not dreamed such things could be. People in Virginia had to take things as they came. Babies.

Now Timothy's marriage was altogether different. Too hasty. Ill-considered. Most unsatisfactory. Constance proved to be a hoyden. Nobody liked her, vain, disagreeable minx. Timothy, most of all, hated her. He realized he had been her dupe. Was it Fisher prosperity she wanted, or to draw off the scent from some maidenly indiscretion? Timothy suspected the worst. He knew her capable of any trickery. But nobody had any sympathy for him. Nobody in the family believed he was anything but wholly blameworthy for the whole affair. He was in deep disgrace. Much as the family disliked Constance, they considered her badly sinned against. On no other grounds would they have been willing to take her under the roof.

Constance did not fit into any of the Fisher conventions. She and Miss Elsie Fisher had different ideals and aims in life. Constance teased Rob because that made Timothy sus-

picious and jealous. She alternately petted and bossed Herb, so that Mrs. Fisher felt her influence over him undermined. But above all she exasperated and troubled Mr. Fisher. She had no awe of him. She transgressed all the principles of his bourgeois soul. He thought in his heart that soon she would be having a baby; naturally the whole affair of the marriage turned on that prospect. 'When you become a mother . . . ' he began. Constance was particularly busy being objectionable. She cut him short, stubbing out her cigarette: 'Nix on a baby. I shan't have one. I know how to be careful.' Mr. Fisher went purple with rage and embarrassment. No baby? Then foolish Timothy had indeed been trapped by an adventuress. Mr. Fisher sputtered out of the room. Constance's shrill laughter pursued after him. Mocked in his own house!

Miss Rosie Fisher got on no better with the new sister-in-law than the rest of the family. But Miss Rosie Fisher was alive to the romantic glamour . . . love at first sight . . . 'comet love' . . . elopement . . . family surprise . . . anger . . . forgiveness. It was just like a novel. However, it was all in the abstract so far as Rosie was concerned, the sentimental details.

In the concrete Rosie had two grievances. She did not like her brother's wife. She said: 'She's fast.' And she did not like her own love affair to fall to second place. The elopement of Timothy and Constance held first place in the eyes of all. Nobody had a word or a thought to give to Rosie and the paternal prohibitions that dogged her steps with Mr. Ned Temple.

Miss Rosie Fisher set her mind to renovate her own romance. Now if she could just run away with her lover, how delectable that would be! Timothy's elopement gave her that idea. She could think of nothing more ingenious to do to reinstate herself in the public attention. So Miss Rosie Fisher fell back on her clandestine love affair. Mr. Ned Temple must see how essential it was to run away to be married. But Mr. Ned Temple seemed content with matters as they stood. She tried the trick of making him jealous. Under her lover's very eyes she coyly encouraged the advances of one Lawrence Sawyer. But the patient, faithful Ned would not take fire. Instead he turned sallow and sad. The very last thing he was expected to do. Rosie felt her maneuver a failure. She was desperate.

Miss Rosie Fisher was desperate for lack of success with romance. The spot-light that earlier in the year had played over her so flatteringly refused to return. The fickle beacon persisted in picking out Timothy and Constance. Timothy and Constance lived in the brightest of public glares. Everybody talked of their romance. Even the New York papers wrote it up . . . not, it is true, in the society columns, but amongst the murders and fires and divorces on the third or fourth page. Envy bit Miss Rosie's soul.

The Fishers belonged to the Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian Church nursed a particular concern in the affair of the marriage. The minister called. Constance was invited into the fold. But she stunned the mild man by the offhand remark that she was a Catholic. Could anything be worse!

'But, Constance, you are not a Catholic,' remonstrated Mrs. Fisher when the crestfallen minister had gone. 'Why did you tell such a falsehood?'

Constance was quite light about it. 'No other way to get rid of the old boy.' And she laughed complacently.

Shocking! The Presbyterian Fishers, what

had they come to! An unprincipled girl thrust into the bosom of their religion. But Constance had Lares and Penates of her own. They were mostly unclassifiable. She said, 'Beauty is my religion.' 'Then you did not live up to it when you married Timothy,' tartly commented one of Timothy's grandmothers, 'for he is the very homeliest boy ever I saw.' Constance laughed gayly. But Mrs. Fisher wept. Her motherly pride was wounded.

Miss Rosie Fisher was right; home was undoubtedly 'horwible.'

Miss Rosie Fisher redoubled her efforts to land her lover. She was genuinely eager for change and escape from the strained life and bickerings at home. She desired romantic notoriety too. But why would Mr. Ned Temple so hang fire? Why wouldn't he be definite with a time-and-place proposal of marriage? Miss Rosie Fisher flung herself into voluminous and passionate letters to Mr. Ned Temple.

Black Sadie saw Miss Rosie Fisher writing the letters. Sometimes she was given them to post. Naturally she felt a warm curiosity about the contents. She could not open them, as she might have done, because Miss Rosie Fisher sealed them all with speckled gold seal-

ing-wax. Sadie felt somewhat resentful that she had not been confided in by Rosie. But Rosie felt that she had launched herself on a serious enterprise and had better keep her own counsel. She did.

But Black Sadie knew a number of dodges. One day Constance spied her deciphering the marks on a blotter held up to a mirror. As soon as she could, Constance took the same blotter to a glass. 'There, madam, is what your innocent little Rosie is getting away with right under your eyes.' Constance held the blotter before the cheval glass so that Mrs. Fisher could read the scattered sentiments thus brought to visibility. Constance sniggered with wicked pleasure. She was delighted to deflect family disapproval from herself to Rosie, though she would have preferred Elsie as a victim. Poor Mrs. Fisher, that she should be so deceived and disappointed in her children! And poor Miss Rosie Fisher, that her secret hopes and heart should thus be paraded in the light by an enemy! Certainly home was 'horwible.'

Quecene called on Sadie in East Orange. She looked so plump. Her purple cloth dress

strained at the seams. Black braid, like Martian canals, worked out a crazy geometry on body and skirt. Quecene's bust emerged from the upstanding rim of her corset as though from a tub. The corset stuck up all the way around in a most aggressive fashion, and Quecene's fat arms dangled over the edges. She sat on one side of the kitchen table and Sadie sat on the other side.

How was the Poro business? Fine. How long did Sadie propose remaining in service to the white folks? Sadie hadn't given the matter serious thought. Had Quecene anything better to suggest? Certainly. How would Sadie fancy being in 'my establishment'? No. Sadie considered Poro a failure . . . one more swindle . . . she remembered the Yankee peddler who sold Aunt Thorry a box of oil and tar for the same purpose. Quecene pooh-poohed the argument. Old-fashioned hoax. But Poro was a new invention from Chicago, as though the name of the city guaranteed a *bona-fide* article, success. However, she wasn't exactly thinking of Poro. She herself could easily handle that trade. What she had in mind was her 'rooms.' She rented rooms by the night or day. She had Lucy to help her, but she needed

another girl. Now, Sadie would be just the one. She offered her first chance. A good many 'guests' came to the rooms alone. When they brought girls with them, there was usually a fuss. Quecene didn't want the police in a respectable 'establishment,' to wit, her own. Now, if she had her own girls . . . all would go well . . . there would be rules. What about it? Would Sadie come? There was money in it. And Quecene departed, swishing her purple skirts, walking grandly.

But Sadie felt quite satisfied with things as they stood. The Fishers were not unkind. The wages were good. Sadie had been in the house two years. When she asked for forty dollars a month, she got it. Yes; she did very well with the Fishers. There were numerous private perquisites too. Why jeopardize such satisfactions for Quecene, who had already almost got her into trouble with her 'snow trade'? Most of all there was Peter. Sadie had no desire to leave Peter. Peter would never consent to her living in an 'establishment.' Sadie wouldn't even dare tell him what Quecene had offered. She 'had Lucy's number.'

In two years Sadie had learned a good deal. She had to. Everything was so different from

what it had been in Virginia. An entirely new technic was required. Sadie was no longer a green 'cornfiel' nigger.' She now belonged to the industrialized and new colored race of the Northern cities. Sadie knew how to take care of herself. She had no intention of turning a bad corner as Ann or Lucy had done. And though Quecene lived floridly, she lived on the dark edges of life... the 'green wagon' or the 'black wagon' always just around the corner.

Sadie had learned much from the Fishers. Her speech was better. She knew about clothes, not only for the upper classes, but for herself as well. But more than from anybody else Sadie learned from Constance. Sadie and Constance had an affinity for one another. Constance taught her so many delightful tricks, toilette dodges, humorous slang, feminine short-cuts to personal advantages and admiration. She showed her how to do eye-brows, how to make one's eyes large and shining, how to use the little pot of pink paste. She was prodigal too in gifts, trinkets, small coins, clothes, this and that, that and this. Sadie learned to manicure Constance's hands. It was a great time for a chat.

While Sadie worked on Constance's filbert nails, Constance kept up a steady stream of observation and remark. She abused the family; 'tightwads.' She jeered at Timothy; 'he looked like a goat' and had no spirit. As for Elsie; wasn't she a dud! The old ladies she named Scylla and Charybdis, but that had to be explained to Sadie. She thought it very amusing.

Yes; Sadie was enraptured with Constance. Her sophistication seemed the profoundest wisdom. Mrs. Fisher objected to Constance taking Sadie so much for herself. She remonstrated at the familiarity with a servant. But Constance said: 'She is the only human thing in this house.' So Mrs. Fisher had to be offended and stiffen up. But it made no particle of difference with Constance. She gave Sadie a perfectly new *crêpe de chine* dress just to exasperate the parsimonious soul of her mother-in-law. Effected. Mrs. Fisher groaned aloud.

Constance practiced no reserves with Sadie. She put ideas into her head too. 'You ought never to waste yourself in general service,' she said. 'You are just cut out to be a lady's maid. You just watch "Miss Constance," Sadie; I

don't think I want to swim around in this aquarium much longer. The fish are not what I expected. Do you get that?' Constance laughed frightfully at herself. Such a clever pun! 'When "Miss Constance" is ready to leave, she'll take you too, Sadie. Would you like that? We'll go to Europe!' Sadie had a most sketchy notion as to what Europe might be, but she thought she would like it. 'What'll I go on?' pursued Constance. 'Money, of course. Alimony.' Constance took the buffer away from Sadie to give the final touches herself.

The entire Fisher household was thrown into delightful concern and confusion by a visit from Aunt Roberta. She came in a dashing two-seater driven by a young man in expensive clothes. He had red hair that badly needed cutting. And his face bore every mark of dissipation. He wore white buckskin gloves . . . in June! Aunt Roberta swept up the walk, into the house. The living-room took on a new air, borrowed luster from Aunt Roberta. She tore off a linen duster and a cap. She displayed a sumptuous draped gown and mounds and mounds of hair, snow-white. Dazzling rings

and a wrist-watch. Mrs. Fisher quailed before the lorgnette. Aunt Roberta!

Aunt Roberta rarely came to East Orange, preferring the perimeter of her family to its bosom. 'Middle-class people depress me,' she said. Aunt Roberta lived apart from her kin in a world of her own inhabited by Bohemians . . . New York, Tuxedo, Long Branch, Jamestown. She had 'means.' She was 'in society.' But seldom would she visit the Fishers, even for a 'tea,' never for the Odd Fellows' reception. Inveigle as they would, and did, Aunt Roberta eluded always the blandishments of her family. Mrs. Fisher's elder sister.

Aunt Roberta was better known as the Countess Laschi, a title honestly though abruptly come by. Years ago Roberta Perkins spent a winter in Paris for the purpose of studying 'art.' In the Louvre she met Stanislas Laschi, also studying 'art.' He was young. She was beautiful, auburn hair and a magnificent poise. Both were lonely. What more natural than love? And love it was. But not for long. The Perkins family undertook a genuine effort to harmonize their concepts of life to include that of a Polish count. But the Laschi family made no such effort to embrace an

American daughter-in-law. Stanislas received his orders and various arguments and inducements to come home, and Roberta was left alone with the title and alimony. She had been offered the latter, but she stipulated the retention of the former as the terms of the divorce. The title glittered, especially in America, and the alimony was ample. The divorce was complete. All were satisfied.

The Fishers were very proud of their noble kinswoman. 'My sister, the Countess Laschi ...' 'Our rich aunt in New York ...' Her name frequently appeared in the columns of the New York 'Times,' or 'Herald' ... 'the Countess Laschi's salon' ... 'the Countess Laschi has discovered a new genius in Corda Van Corda, whose picture is First Prize in the Metropolitan Exhibition' ... and so forth, frequently. The newspaper clippings decorated the rims of the looking-glasses over the bureaus of the Fishers.

The Countess Laschi swept into the living-room and the scent of verbena and the glitter of gems metamorphosed the place. Sadie peeped through the pantry door at the glorious apparition. What made her eyes so black? Kol. And the snow-white hair, such quanti-

ties of it with a jet bandeau. Jet seemed the birthmark of the Perkinses!

The Countess Laschi dispatched her business. 'No; I won't sit down. Get *Maman* into presentable shape. I came to see her. I can't bear it if she's sloppy, all dusted with dandruff and hair. She usually is. She was the last time I came. I had nausea for hours. Old people are revolting. . . . How are you all? . . . I am off for Saratoga to-morrow. If I was coming at all, I had to come to-day. The dear boy in the machine outside drove me over. . . . Who is he? I don't know, I'm sure. Some scion of a wealthy family, doubtless . . . they all are. His name is Chalmer, Chalmer Neale Truben. Of course that's not his real name, but it seemed more appropriate. . . . Willie Tompkins or Thompson, something of the sort . . . impossible. I couldn't stand it. But as I was saying, I am launching him. He's a marvel, something new, a cubist. . . . What? . . . No, it has nothing to do with physical culture nor gymnastics. It's the new art. Cubism. Solids instead of planes or lights. It's the inevitable in art, revolutionary. I'm most interested in him, because of his genius, you know. He will set New York on fire. . . .

What say? . . . No, I'm sure he doesn't want to come in . . . don't ask him. . . . So your eldest son is married? Sudden, wasn't it? Love or opportunity? What's she like? Not that I am interested. Don't suppose it. One more Fisher is a calamity. I hope there will be no children.'

Mrs. Fisher undulated helplessly. She opened and shut her mouth just like a fish gasping for its life. How terrible Roberta was! She had no sensibilities, no feeling for other people. Her own family were less than strangers to her. Mrs. Fisher could hardly take in the meaning of the flow of words. Terrible!

Miss Rosie gushed into the room. Aunt Roberta put up her lorgnette. Rosie announced that 'darling grandmamma' was now quite ready to receive her guest. The affectionate little thing twined her arms around the Countess's waist. Aunt Roberta shook her off as she mounted the stairs.

In half an hour down she came again. Mrs Fisher lay in wait in the hall. Refreshments? No, she could not go without just a little cooling drink. Ginger ale. Nabiscos. Black Sadie dispensed the delicacies. Yes, very refreshing. The day was warm. *Maman's*

room so stuffy with dead air. Quite nice to stick mint in the ginger ale. Take some out to the auto. Still Aunt Roberta would not sit down. She stood in the hall near the door, a glass in one hand, a nabisco in the other. The silver lorgnette dangled by a chain.

The horn on the automobile blew. The countess jumped, startled. It blew again. Again. Insistent. 'Mercy! what's the matter with him? Why should he be so impatient?' exclaimed the Countess. Off she went. 'Good-bye. Good-bye.' The horn kept up its fanfare.

Chalmer Neale Truben kept jamming the horn with one hand; with the other he crammed nabiscos into his mouth. Black Sadie stood by with supplies of ale and biscuits. As the Countess appeared, Chalmer Neale Truben jumped up from his seat. Very excited. 'Listen, lady,' he exploded. 'Look at this colored girl! Isn't she perfect! Wonderful problem!... All triangles and cones... solids... what a study! Africa Victrix... the Zambeezi... the Niger... Nubia! I must do her!'

Aunt Roberta put up her lorgnette. 'A colored girl?' she said, gazing at Sadie. 'Interesting.'

But Chalmer Neale Truben was fired. This

polite interest did not meet his enthusiasm. He leaned far out of the car. 'Concentrate,' he expostulated. 'Look at her again.' He pointed out lines on Sadie. He indicated angles. Traced curves. Suggested solids by the motion of his hands. 'Have you ever seen anything so unique, so perfect?' he exulted. 'Could we get her to pose, do you think?'

The Countess looked more closely at Sadie. The eulogies roused her attention. She walked all around her, looking her up and down. Sadie held her ground impassively. What was it all about? The young sport was spilling his ginger ale. Was he crazy or something to be scattering her with the crumbs of a nabisco crushed in his hand? And what was the matter with the lady! Sadie wondered if her dress was open behind. She looked unperturbed, but she felt a little uneasy just the same.

The Countess came back to the door of the car. 'Hmn,' she said. 'Hardly my idea of Africa. No fulsomeness. No suggestive fecundity. Dry, almost sterile. Briar rather than a fruitful bough. The skull is unusual.'

'You are wrong,' interrupted Chalmer Neale Truben (Willie Tompkins). 'You are expecting something gross, something physical, un-

concealed. As a matter of fact I see just the opposite . . . mystery, secrecy, some intense vitality, some subtle enigma. It's mind, not body, that she represents. What a skull! You did notice that. It's the focus of the geometry, the pivot of the study. Don't you agree? We must get her to do. We'll surprise the world. We'll smash every moss-grown convention.'

The Countess Laschi got into her seat. 'Sit down,' she said to the exuberant artist. 'I believe you are right. We'll try. But it must be a secret. I am glad not to be disappointed in you. I felt sure you would reward me with something new . . . out of the ordinary . . . some acute intelligence of perception. The gods have spilt a treasure in your lap.'

The Countess Laschi turned to Sadie. 'My friend and I wish to make some drawings of you. It will take some time. In the autumn I shall send for you to pose in my studio. Will you come? You will receive six dollars a day. You will have to give up this job. Give your mistress notice for September. Good-bye.'

The two-seater sped away.

Six dollars a day! Nearly a hundred dollars a month! Would Sadie take it? For posing? For just sitting still to be drawn! Would she!

Sadie returned to her kitchen. Six dollars a day!

The first of September Sadie gave the Fishers notice.

She told Peter she had a new job. To work for a lady in New York for six dollars a day. Peter said: 'Bully! Six dollars a day!'

Wealth! Six dollars a day!

III

BLACK SADIE deserted domestic service for Art. The Countess Laschi set the date and sent her chauffeur in an automobile to convey Sadie to New York. The automobile arrived at Sadie's door in Harrison, New Jersey, at nine o'clock. Peter was long since gone 'on the route.' When the chauffeur knocked at the door, Sadie peeped out and said she would be ready in a minute. 'Yes, Miss,' said the chauffeur. Yes, Miss? How unusual for a white man to call a colored girl 'Miss.' 'Yes, Miss.' Undoubtedly the artistic world was prepared to give life a novel twist. Sadie armed herself in a plush coat and a black hat with yellow roses round the crown to meet the twist. She locked her door and stepped up to the automobile.

Black Sadie got into the Countess Laschi's automobile, in the tonneau. The chauffeur held open the door, and he tipped his cap to her. La, la! What do you think of that for ole Nancy Ritchie's grandchild? 'Cornfiel' nigger' in a limousine! Black Sadie braced herself. She sat up stiff and straight. And the automobile made for Hoboken and the ferry. Pretty

soon they were in New York. New York: Sadie had never been there before. It was a very large place, and a great many automobiles in the streets; very high buildings, and trains above the streets on trestles. Quite a wonderful sight. Sadie gazed fixedly straight before her, but she saw a great deal just the same. New York. New life. Art.

The Countess Laschi lived in Park Avenue near to the hoardings around the new Grand Central Station. The house had a brownstone front. It was indistinguishable from hundreds of others in the same vicinity. But inside all was different. The Countess Laschi made sure of that. The rooms in her house were 'period.' It was the latest mode for interiors. Nothing incongruous in the Jacobean library peering somberly into the sprightly Louis Quinze drawing-room, nor the Louis Quinze drawing-room peeping coyly through folding doors into a Colonial dining-room. And upstairs just the same . . . Renaissance, Directoire, Georgian bedrooms lay contentedly cheek by jowl. The third floor was not so careful, or careless. The third floor had no 'period' rooms. It was uniformly Victorian. Here the maids dwelt in a welter of furniture banished from belowstairs

... Somber walnut bedsteads with excessively high backs wrought in wooden scrolls and garlands, marble-top washhand-stands with a drawer for towels and a cabinet below for chambers, and plenteous bowls and pitchers and slop-jars painted with roses, irises, and birds, variantly. And there were horsehair chairs and sofas in profusion. Solid comfort, but not 'period' according to the taste of the day. The third floor was the wrong period decidedly. But the maids were entirely comfortable.

The Countess Laschi had arranged the entire fourth floor of her house for her studio. She herself was a cartoonist; quite a successful one. Charcoal was her *métier*. She never touched anything else. Though she did not experiment in oils or washes, she conducted a veritable laboratory for the production of genius. The Countess Laschi always had a new genius on hand, sometimes several. She 'produced' them in her studio. Now she was producing Willie Tompkins under the more arresting name of Chalmer Neale Truben. Thus her protégé was introduced, thus he signed his name and his work, but the Countess Laschi refused to budge from 'Willie' herself.

The Countess Laschi and Chalmer Neale Truben were sure they had found a treasure in Black Sadie. Chalmer felt an artist's geometric interest in her anatomy. The Countess Laschi hoped to enhance her own *éclat* by producing a new and quite startling genius. What a unique convulsion New York Bohemia, *et cetera*, would experience in assimilating a negro girl. Nobody had ever conceived of such a thing before. The Countess Laschi provisioned a furor for negro subjects, a cultus, a vogue in art, literature, music, mysticism. She was most enthusiastic. It should be done. And Black Sadie should be her medium. The studio of the Countess Laschi should blaze with unexpected glory. The city and the world would be so surprised. The New Negro . . . unfathomed depths of mysterious romance, unplumbed abysses of artistic possibilities, untilled fields fertile with new life and inspiration for the somewhat jaded interests of the metropolis. If the Countess Laschi could produce a new fad, what streams of light would play about her head and endow her name with fame. So the Countess Laschi appointed a day for the new experiment to begin. She sent her automobile and liveried chauffeur to Harrison to fetch Black Sadie across the Hudson River.

Black Sadie came. The car stopped at the door. A maid opened the door. Black Sadie entered the home of the Countess Laschi. The suit of samurai armor in the lower hall gave Sadie quite a start. The spear pointed straight at her. But the dry bamboo grass sticking out of the neck-hole reassured Sadie. She passed by. The maid led the way. 'Madame is in the studio. She will see you there,' said the maid. Sadie tiptoed up the stairs. The carpets were ever so soft. Front door, front stairs, led by a maid — surely the world of art was very different from that of service. Sadie wondered what might turn up next. But she prepared herself for anything.

On the second floor she glimpsed the Spanish bedroom. On the third floor the doors were closed. On the fourth floor she entered the studio. The Countess Laschi and Chalmer Neale Truben met her on the threshold. The Countess wore a smock quite smudged with black. Chalmer Neale Truben also wore a smock. It was smeary with paint. Art.

The studio was one long *salle*. The windows were sealed up and all the light poured in through series of skylights in the roof. Red-and-gold lacquer screens lined the walls. Here

and there lay monstrous cushions, divans. Sadie tabulated them 'ticks.' But she was still quite unsophisticated and green. She had much to learn of art. Everything else in the studio in the way of furniture was paraphernalia . . . easels, a platform on rollers, some high chairs and low chairs, and some other things standing around.

Chalmer and the Countess greeted Sadie cordially. They treated her as an equal. That quite dazed Sadie. But she managed to maintain her customary impassivity. Which way would the cat jump next? How strange was art! What was she expected to do? Not an idea.

She was not long in doubt. The Countess made her take off her hat and coat. She stood Sadie in the light. She looked her up and down and round about, humming. 'Divine! Unique! . . . You must not straighten your hair . . . *au naturel*. What a skull! And the color, ebony! The possibilities in you are infinite. Hmmn! Hmmn! . . . Clothes. You must have clothes. . . . But for the moment . . . How shall we pose her to-day, Willie?'

'Willie' was scraping his palette. He looked up. But the Countess really had no thought

of giving him the decision. She swept on, thoughts and words together.

‘She must stand. Very erect. Tall. Mysterious, but in a strong light. Put her on the platform, Willie. Wheel it about until we get just the correct light.’

Sadie climbed onto the platform. Chalmer rolled it around the studio. Sadie sat in a chair to keep from pitching off the moving stage. When the Countess cried ‘Stop!’ she stood up for her to decide about the light. When the Countess said ‘Go!’ Sadie sat down again, and Chalmer pushed her around some more. He got quite winded with the exertion.

At last the Countess was satisfied. ‘Stop!’ she cried. ‘That light is perfect.’

Chalmer stood up. He wiped his brow and his hands with a large white silk handkerchief. Sadie also stood up, but she did not need to wipe anything but her nose. A small handkerchief did for that. The Countess walked round and round the platform.

‘Drapery,’ mused the Countess aloud. ‘Something flowing? . . . No, something close to enhance the height of the figure. A swathe? The very thing, wrapped evenly and closely from head to heel. . . . Willie, she’s a genuine

discovery. The possibilities are infinite. I congratulate you on the keenness and rapidity of your perceptive powers. I should never have given her an eye. The servant girl at the Fishers'! Ha!'

Black Sadie was swathed in a very long strip of red cloth. She stood perfectly still and straight on the platform. The Countess and Chalmer sat on two little chairs before her on the floor. They swabbed away on canvases for half an hour, then Sadie was unwrapped. She had five minutes to rest. She walked around to look at the canvases on which the artists had been working so hard. Swipes, smears, long black strokes. That was all. Now, what was the use in her standing so stiff and still if that was all there was to show for it? Art. Wasn't it mysterious? Even at the end of the morning there was little better to show.

But the Countess and Chalmer conversed together with enthusiasm. Sadie didn't understand a word they said. The Countess seemed to be explaining something, many things to him. He nodded his head. Sometimes he wiped his hands on the white silk handkerchief. He smeared a good deal of paint on it, but he didn't seem to notice. Perhaps he didn't mind

spoiling his handkerchief. The Countess streaked charcoal on her neck and face. Her fingers were quite black with the coal dust. She didn't seem to notice or mind either. Sadie thought: 'She can wash her hands and face, but the paint will never come out of that silk handkerchief.'

At noon the maid brought trays of lunch. Sandwiches, nuts, tea. The Countess smoked. She offered Sadie a cigarette. Sadie was amazed at the freedom and *camaraderie* of her employers. She felt greatly embarrassed having to eat with them. The Countess said: 'You can't begin too soon to find your way.' It seemed to Sadie a cryptic observation, or was it a command? She could not tell. She felt very ill at ease. She almost felt like crying. Everything was so strange. These strange people! Would she ever get home to Harrison and Peter!

The afternoon dragged by. Sadie never felt so tired in her life before. The half-hours were lifetimes. Sadie gritted her teeth and stuck her ground. The Countess and Chalmer worked. They accomplished nothing so far as Sadie could see. If they got no picture done, would she get her six dollars? The thought pricked

her like a pin. Poor Black Sadie, it was too much in one day.

But the end came, and the six dollars, and the automobile and the chauffeur. The Countess and Chalmer shook hands with Sadie and said good-bye. The Countess told her the chauffeur would come for her earlier in the morning, as he would show her how to come on the train and the cars. After that she would be able to come by herself. Sadie was too fagged out to say a word. She grasped the six dollars firmly, convulsively in one hand. So they wanted her to come back to-morrow? Six dollars a day; it was a good deal. For that she had given up her job with the comfortable Fishers and launched out into the high tempests of art. For six dollars she would endure the strain one more day, then she would never, never, never come again. She couldn't. It was too hard, too terrifying. Those white folks were crazy. They didn't know how to treat niggers.

How far from East Orange! How removed from Virginia! As far as hell!

Sadie wept on Peter's arm when she got home. Dear Peter, so safe, so ordinary, so good, her husband. But Peter misconstrued

the cause of the tears. He saw the six dollars. He thought it was joy that brought the tears. 'Is it er hard job?' he asked, patting her shoulder. 'Are yer tired? Wanter go ter the movies? Wanter go ter church?' Yes, church, the Star African Methodist Episcopal Church, and her own people, her own kind, the Ladies of the Valley of Israel, the Sons and Daughters of the Ethiopian Eunuch.

So Sadie and Peter went to church in Newark, and Reverend Rand preached about the 'African Peoples,' the 'Negro Race,' and what they ought to do and say to assert themselves against the white people. Sadie felt she could never, never assert herself against white people like the Countess Laschi and Chalmer Neale Truben. When they came outdoors, Peter bought some peanuts from the 'guinea,' and the 'Eyetalian' monkey jumped up and down on the curb.

The Countess Laschi plumed herself on having hit upon a novel idea, a new cultus for the intelligentsia — the Negro. How original! Enthusiasm grew in the soul of the Countess Laschi for her astonishing fad. But it was a pleasure she could not enjoy alone. Others must be

drawn into the exciting vortex of the 'movement.' The Countess launched a vigorous campaign. She talked a great deal on the subject.

The 'movement' must be given momentum. It must take form and direction. Very large ideas swelled up in the Countess's mind. The cult had possibilities in so many ways. It could be brought to influence art in all its departments . . . painting, music, literature, the drama. Black Sadie was well enough to begin with, an exponent of the quantitative idea, but the Countess must have other grist for her mill. She intended to create a demand; grist must be there to satisfy it.

The Countess lectured in several women's clubs. She drew into her studio sympathetic souls whom she fired with her enthusiasm. Young writers were entreated to write on the theme. The Countess Lasci let out an eye for the discovery of some playwright who would portray negro subjects for the stage. She had heard of a young man in Cambridge named Nelson, or something like that, a bold, independent spirit, who might be intrigued with the dramatic side of the question. She would inquire about him further. Just at hand were

the art schools of New York. They offered the easiest opening. The Countess felt sure she could get them to patronize her fad. She interviewed Mr. Henri. She saw Mr. Bellows. She searched for 'types for models' in Harlem and Brooklyn. She was indefatigable.

Day by day Black Sadie posed in the Countess Laschi's studio. The Countess worked on cartoons, sketches, studies: in chalk, in charcoal, in pen and ink. Chalmer Neale Truben plunged into unfathomable wonders of cubism with oils, a large canvas and two smaller ones. The pictures were to be shown at the Winter Exhibition.

The studio was thronged with admirers of the Countess and Chalmer. Geniuses. The visitors exclaimed over Sadie. Such an unusual 'type.' 'Not a type at all,' remonstrated the Countess. 'She's absolutely unique, *sui generis*. She's my inspiration for the whole thing.' Bohemia chattered: 'The negro . . . the bizarre, novel idea! So intriguing, so provocative!' Some declared it too fanciful to be worth while. Others were sure it was 'depraved.' It would fall flat. One perspicacious person asked if the cultus was merely intended for something for white people to utilize, or

were the negroes themselves going to produce a distinctive art? In other words were they blocks to be carved, or plants to grow and bloom? But the Countess had an answer for every question. She rose to meet any occasion.

Black Sadie was entirely nonplussed by all the talk she heard going on around her. She couldn't see any sense in art. How much less in artists! Hour after hour she stood resolutely in the center of the platform wrapped tightly from head to heel in the strip of red cloth. Her eyes were fastened on a golden swastika in the upper corner of a red lacquer screen. In the rest periods she drank a cup of tea and examined the inexplicable things the artists had done. The pictures did not resemble her in the least. Still, six dollars a day was enough for her. Let others do as they pleased.

Sadie learned to make the trip into the city by herself. She came every day. *Sometimes the Countess was at home and wanting to work; sometimes she wasn't. The same with Chalmer. Nevertheless, work or not, Sadie got her wages every evening. If her employers were out when she arrived, she waited just the same.

Sadie had the run of the studio. She read

stories in the magazines. Sometimes she looked at pictures. Behind the lacquer screens scores of canvases stood with their fronts to the wall. Sadie turned them around to see. Some of the pictures were of people with no clothes on. How dreadful! Who would allow such liberties? Sadie, not she!

Sadie was beginning to like her job. She no longer felt suffocated in the studio. The white people no longer terrified her. She enjoyed the daily trip into the city. And she liked posing. She liked her wages too. Besides, there were other little advantages and gains. A great many people came to the Countess Laschi's studio. They often dropped or forgot little articles valuable in Sadie's eyes . . . handkerchiefs, trinkets, scarves, gloves . . . umbrellas, handbags, mufflers, such like. Sometimes the handbags contained quite considerable sums of money. Yes; life was more profitable for Sadie in New York than it had been in East Orange. It was very different, always surprising. Sadie thought she would stick to art.

In a month or two pictures from the Countess Laschi's pen began to appear in the newspapers. Cartoons. The New York 'Herald.' The 'Times.' And there were drawings in the

magazines. The Countess showed them to Sadie. Sadie was surprised to see them. She would never have recognized herself at all. But it was wonderful to be in the papers. And the names of the pictures . . . 'Negro Girl' . . . 'African Priestess' . . . 'Vital Study' . . . 'Mystic Freedom.' Such titles!

The Countess was prone to read into her work all she herself thought she saw in Sadie . . . mystery, veiled intelligence, emotion, passion. The psychology of the negro. Notions of the Countess. Sadie did not possess any of these delectable qualities. She was merely a colored servant girl snatched by fancy to serve the Countess's whim. Never mind . . . 'the mills of the gods' and all that.

The Countess Laschi took her *penchant* very seriously. 'The time has come for a new viewpoint towards the African People,' she explained. 'It is a great race, mysterious, ancient. They have been enslaved. . . . Merely their kinetic powers utilized and employed for manual labor. The souls and the minds were never touched. They slept. The vitalities of the spirit have not been permitted to appear. It is our task to bring them out.' The Countess glowed with eager enthusiasm. 'Art in all its

forms must be the media for this movement of liberation. Hitherto,' she went on, 'the negro has been laughed at, burlesqued, snubbed. The racial power and dignity could not come into play. Bourgeois tyranny! Depressing. Hopeless. But we must constitute ourselves the New Liberators. We shall discover the hidden beauties, the latent powers of the soul of this race. The negroes!'

The 'movement' was the talk of the town. Was it real? Could colored people give anything to art? Unheard-of, daring idea. What would it lead to? Everybody had theories on the subject. How interesting!

Pictures in the papers! Sadie showed some of them to Peter. Peter said: 'My Gawd! Is zat you? Ain't 'ey crazy-lookin'! What will white people want ter do wid us colored folks next?'

That appeared to Sadie an oblique viewpoint. They were her pictures. Peter ought to be proud of them. Instead he criticized. Sadie was offended with him. She felt superior to him too. Who was Peter, anyway? Just a nigger postman, nothing but 'er big black coon.' Were pictures of him ever likely to be in the newspapers and magazines? Not much! Would

anybody ever make money on his 'mug'? Nix; he hadn't a chance.

So Sadie spoke right up to Peter. She answered him tartly. He wasn't her boss. She reckoned she was free. She made her own money. She didn't look to him for anything. They were not married, anyway. Airs.

Peter's mind struggled with this turn of affairs. It was hard to understand. Was Sadie threatening to leave him? He couldn't tell. She had changed so much since she took the job in New York. She didn't seem the same old girl at all. Was it marriage she wanted? Well, Peter was willing. He said as much. But Sadie sniffed. She said, 'No handcuffs on me.' Now whatever could she mean? Peter was wounded badly. The future seemed quite problematical to him. Puzzled, mystified Peter. Distressed man. Airy, obstreperous Sadie. Vain girl.

One fine Sunday afternoon Sadie went to Newark. She left Peter at home asleep on the bed. She had it in mind to call on Quecene. It was a long time since she had seen her cousin. Sadie walked. She crossed the bridge over the Passaic River from Harrison to Newark. Then

she strolled up Broad Street. As she stepped along, she glanced at herself reflected in the plate-glass windows of the shops. The vision pleased her.

The vision pleased her. She looked slim, and she carried herself well. The admiration of the New York artists had made her proud and self-conscious. They admired her poise. They admired her head. So Sadie admired her poise and glanced happily at the reflection of her head in the plate-glass windows. She was well-dressed too. *Chic*. The artists had taught her that. Sadie was entirely pleased with herself. As she walked along, looking at herself, she repeated phrases she had caught in the studio: 'Balanced mass,' and she tilted her chin; 'lithe'; 'the smoothest ebony'; 'eyes like carbuncles, perfectly set' . . .

When Sadie came to Market Street, she turned down into the by-ways and purlieus of the city. She thought she remembered the street where Quecene's 'establishment' was. As she hesitated at a corner, not sure which way to turn, the clanging police patrol swept by. A policeman swayed on the step at the back of the patrol-wagon. Sadie looked over his shoulder into the patrol. Inside the 'green

wagon' sat Quecene and Lucy. Well! so the 'establishment' had been raided! So much for Quecene.

Black Sadie retraced her way. She picked her steps carefully, looking in the shop windows as she went. A little smile played about the corners of her mouth. In Hahne's windows Sadie picked out in her mind's eye all the things she would like to buy . . . dresses, fans, shoes, hose, and a hundred and one other desirable things.

The next day on the ferry from Hoboken to Twenty-Third Street Sadie met Mr. Lowry. How odd that he should bob up in her path again, just after she had seen Quecene too. But Mr. Lowry did not see Sadie. He was too busy. He had a shoe-shine outfit and he went about the ferry-boat polishing the shoes of the commuters. It seemed honest work.

Sadie passed close to him. Her dress brushed his stuck-out heels. She hurried by to the forward deck, where she stood watching New York over the way. The river was thronged with craft. Some gulls flew overhead. Sadie felt very free and happy. Black Sadie.

Amelia Rogers was a discarded genius. The

Countess Laschi had twice undertaken to 'develop' her. She had twice failed. Amelia had aspired to the plastic arts and woodcarving. She achieved nothing. So she had no money and she lived in Greenwich Village. She made a living by doing figures in plaster for advertisements . . . plaster boys fattening on breakfast foods, plaster dogs wearing patent collars, plaster figures representing quack medicines. Remunerative, but not 'art.'

Now and then Amelia came to see the Countess for old times' sake, and the Countess was always glad to see her. She treated her kindly, like an old lapdog. Amelia was quite innocuous, aimless. Her character was flabby, and she was fat. But she possessed one robust virtue; she never toadied to the Countess. She liked her instead. And the Countess liked Amelia. Far apart as the poles, somehow they managed to be friends. 'I have a single bourgeois friend,' said the Countess — 'Amelia Rogers. I appreciate the rest of you, dears, because of that one exception.' The Countess was so piquant, the droll thing!

The Countess never invited Amelia to any of her social affairs. 'She'll come anyway if she wants to.' And Amelia did, but not often.

Sometimes she turned up at studio teas. She was more likely to come unexpectedly for lunch. If she drifted in, the Countess would exclaim: 'Here's Amelia! Set another place.' And Amelia offered no excuses. Down she would sit and listen placidly to everything the Countess had to say. That was always a great deal.

Amelia made a good foil for the titled exuberance. She absorbed shock. Even the Countess's enthusiasm for her new fad of the Negro failed to move Amelia. The Countess tried to fire her. 'Aren't you thrilled, Amelia? It's all so absolutely new.' 'No,' replied the futile Amelia, 'what is there in it for me?' True; nothing for her. 'I can't stimulate her,' confessed the Countess, 'but I'm positive I don't bore her. Do I, Amelia?' 'Oh, no,' said Amelia, 'not at all.'

One day Amelia came to the studio just at lunch-time. Sadie sat alone absent-mindedly picking a lobster. The maid fetched another plate and a cup. Amelia shared the lobster and drank some tea. Sadie no longer minded eating with white people. It had happened so often since she came to the studio of the Countess Lasci. In her the natural shyness of the savage

was becoming rapidly sublimated. She was beginning to accept life as it came. Things couldn't always remain the same.

'Are you working this afternoon?' A little tip of lettuce leaf stuck helplessly out of the corner of Amelia's mouth. .

'Not likely,' said Sadie. 'There's nobody here. But I must stay till five o'clock.'

Amelia settled herself in her chair. 'I'm glad to find you alone,' she said, sucking in the lettuce leaf. 'I have wanted to talk to you ever since we first met. You see, I am from Minnesota; I have never known any colored girls. I like you. Couldn't we be friends?'

Sadie had never given the matter thought.

'You see,' went on Amelia, 'everybody is talking about you. You are quite famous . . . because of the illustrations in the magazines. It's due to the Countess, of course. And she has started a whole covey of exciting ideas in connection with you . . . all about colored people. They have never been "treated" before. It's a brand-new idea, so the world is greatly interested.' Amelia laughed softly, peeping under her lids at Sadie. She folded her plump hands on the edge of the table. The nails were bad, not kept at all.

She took up her tale. 'The art schools are wild to have you pose for their advanced classes. But the Countess won't hear of such a thing, at least not until after the Winter Exhibition. You can't be handed around just yet. The Countess wants the first bite out of you. She is baiting the public with you now. Rank exploitation. But she intends to feed them at the Exhibition. She is sure the pictures she and Chalmer are doing of you will cause a furor. First Prize maybe. They must stand absolutely alone in the Exhibition. Still, there'll be a demand for you later. The schools are fun.'

'The art schools have never asked me to work for them,' put in Sadie. 'I have never been to one of them.'

'No, of course not . . . consider the Countess . . . why, she wouldn't . . . Now, I was talking to the freehand instructor at the New York School of Art the other day and he said the Countess had unearthed a gold mine. That's you, of course. He said they all wanted you at the School, the "life" class particularly. He said he had felt for a long time there were latent possibilities in the colored people, something different from "mammies" and "old

uncles" . . . something less colloquial, a spiritual *élan*. He said: "Now, this Black Sadie we hear so much about . . ." May I have some more tea? . . . "Mr. Fellows," I said, "why, then, don't you get some models like Black Sadie?" . . . You don't mind my calling you that, do you? It's what everybody knows you by.'

Sadie said she did not mind. She had always been Black Sadie.

'You are so black, you know,' Amelia prattled on. 'Your skin is like black satin . . . wonderful texture . . . and your hair so savage. Fascinating! But, anyway . . . the Countess intends keeping you safe until after she has made her splash. She wants to get some ribbons for that red-haired darling of hers. Chalmer has oodles of money, but all he wants is ribbons. Somehow he can't seem to take any prizes. Well, it was much the same with me. I tried too. So did the Countess for me. But I never could get any attention. I gave up trying to be highbrow. I had to make my living. The Countess gave me up too. But Willie Thompson — Chalmer, you know — the Countess is determined to star him. But I think they are on the wrong tack . . . I don't

mean with you. Cubism. People think cubism's a joke. They see light and dark, color, and near and far in perspectives, but solids in paint they can't take in.'

The maid took away the tray. Sadie glanced at the clock.

'Is it late?' asked Amelia, starting up. 'I'm due at the Art School at two o'clock. Dear me, I must flurry along.'

She rose to go, reaching for her coat on the back of her chair. Sadie rose too. She suppressed a yawn. Amelia noticed it.

'It will be tiresome staying here all by yourself,' she said. 'Why not come out with me? I shan't be at the Art School a minute. I would like to have you come home with me afterwards. You have never been in Greenwich Village, have you? There's plenty of time for you to be here again by five o'clock, if you must, just for the matter of form.'

Sadie might as well. She put on her hat and her coat.

The Art School was uptown, on the West Side. It was not an imposing place to see, outside. Amelia pushed open the door. They were in a bare hallway and a bare staircase ahead. Students were coming in for the after-

noon classes. They seemed a drab lot. Some even wore the old-fashioned pompadour. A skinny girl with no chin brushed past Sadie and Amelia. Her mouth was slightly ajar. She had adenoids. There were a few men and youths. Sorry specimens.

Amelia mounted to the second floor. 'Wait here,' she said, at the top of the stairs. 'I must go in the office to pay a bill. I shan't stay a minute.'

Sadie leaned against the newel post. More students straggled up the stairs. They looked at her curiously. She heard one of them whisper: 'That's Black Sadie, the Countess Laschi's find. Her pictures will be sure to take the prize in the Winter Exhibition.' It pleased Sadie to hear it. Another said: 'What do you think of all this new idea . . . Negroes in art? I don't give a damn for it myself . . . too far-fetched entirely. Coons ought to stay in the cornfield and the kitchen where they belong.' These words stung Sadie. She was a long way now from the cornfield and the kitchen. How life had completely altered!

Amelia returned. 'Would you like to see some of the classes?' Sadie would. Amelia led the way through the door on the right. In a

large room sat about fifty girls in semicircles about a platform. On the platform a lot of vegetables were piled up on a box . . . carrots, cabbages, eggplants, helter-skelter. Still-life. In another room children, boys and girls, laboriously sketched plaster casts . . . cones, spheres, cubes . . . heads, arms, torsos . . . Demosthenes, Cicero, Napoleon.

Then Amelia and Sadie walked down a long gallery. On one side were windows; on the other the walls were covered with faded burlap. Row after row of pictures hung against the burlap. Students' work on exhibition. Very terrible. Amateurish. Crayon horrors, charcoal atrocities, water-colors, heavy oils.

At the end of the gallery was a green baize door.

'This is the life class,' said Amelia, and pushed Sadie inside. The sizable room was crowded with students. On a pedestal in their midst stood a young white man stark naked. He posed with his arms folded, one foot thrust forward. He had a prominent Adam's-apple and large red ankle bones. Sadie was petrified. She rushed out into the gallery.

'Oh, that!' laughed Amelia. 'You oughtn't to mind the "life." It's art. Come; I'll show you another.'

It was a woman this time. An Italian girl. She sat on a square of black cloth spread out on the floor. Her chin rested on her propped-up knees. Her arms clasped her legs. Long black hair hung down her back. She seemed to be asleep. Her skin was ivory white. Lovely.

‘The life models get much more pay than the others,’ explained Amelia. She gave Sadie a little twinkling look, quizzical.

Amelia lived in Greenwich Village. She called her domicile ‘my studio.’ One room furnished with a day-bed, a gas-ring, a garbage-can, little else. The door locked with a Yale lock and Amelia kept the key.

Sadie sat on the edge of the day-bed. Amelia knocked about some tea-things. She clapped a tin kettle on the gas-ring. She brought in from the window-ledge a mouldy lemon and a little bottle of cream.

‘Let me show you some of my work,’ said Amelia. She fetched out of hiding some battered plastercine models and a few pieces of badly hacked wood. ‘This is a design for a figure to represent Victory. It’s a prize contest. I failed in it. This is a rejected monument. How do you like the little rabbits? Quite cute,

aren't they?' Amelia purred over her handiwork.

Sadie felt truly sympathetic for Amelia. She was a failure. Misfortune.

The kettle lifted its lid and shot forth a pennant of steam.

'Ah, here's the tea!' Amelia poured out the tea. 'Lemon or cream?' Sadie said: 'Cream, please.' But Amelia slipped a piece of lemon in the cup. Great mistake. When she discovered it, her consternation was overwhelming. She snatched at the cup. It upset. All over Sadie. Sadie sprang to her feet. The tea was very hot.

Amelia screamed. 'Oh, how sorry! Are you burned? Are you drenched? All over your beautiful dress!' She swiped at the front of Sadie's skirt with the piece of newspaper in her hand. She had been holding the handle of the hot tea-kettle with it. 'You are soaked! You must take your things right off. I'll dry them with a hot iron.'

But Sadie did not want to undress. She had never undressed before a white lady before. In the single room there was no private place. But Amelia insisted. And indeed Sadie was very wet. The tea was soaking through everything. It would really be better to take off her

clothes. Amelia took it for granted she would. She dived into a drawer for a towel. She hooked down a kimono. She searched for slippers.

Sadie slid out of her clothes. Even her shoes and stockings came off. Amelia handed her the towel.

‘Oh, you are still wearing your hat!’ exclaimed Amelia. ‘How absurd with no clothes on.’ She flew at Sadie to take away the hat. In her rush she pulled off as well the small black ribbon holding down Saddie’s mop of kinky hair. The naps sprang upright, straight out all over her head.

Amelia stood back to gaze at the naked body of Sadie. She gave a cry of admiration. She was delighted. Artists think highly of the nude. So Amelia thought highly of Sadie. ‘Let me look at you!’ she cried. ‘You are wonderful so . . . graceful as a black panther . . . pliant . . . the color . . . bronze . . . satinwood. How perfectly carved!’

Sadie felt pleased with Amelia’s praise. After all she did not feel shy. She did not feel embarrassed. It was nice to be admired. She stood quite still in the center of the room.

‘Oh, just pose for me a few minutes, please,’ begged Amelia. ‘While your clothes are drying.’

There! Hold that! Put your arms up . . . at the back of your head . . . look up. Marvelous!’

Amelia had out a board bedaubed with lumps of plastersine. Down she sat on the day-bed. Sadie held the pose and Amelia worked. She worked an hour. A small and very delicate figurine was the result. Amelia also made some rapid drawings on a long piece of canvas . . . sweeping lines, long curves, and some measurements, dimensions. She used a tape-measure to take them.

‘There!’ she cried. ‘Look at that!’

Sadie looked at the figurine appreciatively. It really seemed a likeness . . . whereas Chalmer’s cubes and prisms, and the Countess’s chiaroscuros . . . well, Sadie didn’t see much in them.

While Sadie dressed, Amelia wrote her a check for two dollars. She wrote with a pen made of the rolled-up top of a sardine tin. It was really quite artistic. It did very well for a pen. Sadie was glad to have the check. The afternoon had not been dull.

‘Come again,’ cried Amelia. ‘I am so sorry about the tea!’

Amelia Rogers wrote Sadie a note. She asked her to go with her to the Metropolitan

Museum. Sadie had never been there. She had heard of the place. She was glad to go.

The Museum was overwhelming . . . so vast, so cramful of lovely and astonishing things. A superabundance of 'art.' Amelia and Sadie walked for several hours through the corridors and galleries. Amelia met many people she knew. She introduced Sadie, always with a little flourish of manner . . . 'Black Sadie, the Countess Laschi's interesting model.' She had triumph in her voice.

The people were very nice to Sadie. They winked at Amelia and shook hands with Sadie. They seemed both interested and amused. Sadie was asked many curious questions, but she had no answers. Instead she sheltered herself under monosyllables or silence. It was imputed to her for wisdom. Amelia was very pleased because Sadie conducted herself so well. Sadie knew how to be circumspect.

Some of the people said to Amelia, 'Stealing!' and laughed. Was Amelia stealing things in the Museum? Impossible. Some said, 'Poaching!' That was mystifying. Sadie only knew the word in connection with a way to cook eggs. One young man, who carried a cane and wore spats, said, 'How did you get the prize out of

the Dragon's jaws?' Amelia tittered immoderately at that. Sadie couldn't understand why. What was it all about? Who could the Dragon be? Weren't white folks crazy! Sadie was sure she still had much to learn.

However, on the whole, Sadie had a very pleasant afternoon with Amelia in the Art Museum.

Sadie went home with Amelia. Amelia took Sadie out to dinner. They went to a little cellar eating-place called the Cage of Lions. But Sadie did not see any beasts. There were not many people in the eating-house. There was sawdust on the floor, but a few couples danced just the same. Tango. The women all smoked. After dinner, in Amelia's studio, Sadie sat still while Amelia made some plaster-cine models of her head and face. They were friends. But Sadie could not help feeling how strange it was for the white lady to 'society' with a nigger. Sadie was still a little shy.

It was the talk of the art schools and the topic of the day in Bohemia that Amelia Rogers had been seen out with Black Sadie . . . 'stealing the Countess's fire.' People laughed very much. It was a good joke. But nobody told the Countess. Even Chalmer did not know.

One afternoon, just as Sadie was about to enter the subway at Grand Central, the spick-and-span gentleman, with the cane and the spats, Sadie had seen in the Museum, stopped her. Accidental encounter.

'Excuse me,' said the gentleman. 'I believe you are Black Sadie . . . I do not know your real name . . . I met you in the Metropolitan Museum. You are posing for the Countess Laschi . . . everybody has heard of you. The Countess's illustrations are in all the magazines and papers . . . She promises to show us something extraordinary at the Winter Exhibition.' The gentleman paused and bit his lower lip. Then he added under his breath: 'That is, if nobody steals a march on her.'

Sadie was a little startled at the meeting. She said: 'Yes; I'm Black Sadie. I work for the Countess Laschi.' Sadie's diction was nearly perfect now, little accent.

The gentleman stood staring. He seemed to have nothing else to say. Awkward pause. Sadie made as if to go on into the subway entrance, but the gentleman lifted the head of his cane towards her, deprecatingly. Sadie waited. What now?

'Er . . . aw . . . You see,' said the gentleman,

‘I am Fellows . . . New York School of Art. I thought . . . perhaps . . . it occurred to me when I met you . . . Have you ever done “life”?’ he broke in suddenly. ‘I mean posed in the nude, naturally?’

‘Yes,’ answered Sadie, thinking of Amelia.

‘Ah, I didn’t know . . . I feared . . . Now, I wonder if I could have some of your time? I pay well. I am doing something for the Exhibition . . . imaginative piece. I thought of calling it “Dryad.” The girl who posed for me is down with pneumonia . . . I could easily give you the job . . . the same pose, and alter the idea to suit you. Call it “Black Panther” . . . “African Sprite” . . . something like that . . . Credit you with the title, of course. Could you do it? . . . only a few hours a week.’ He paused again and bit his lip.

Sadie still said nothing. The gentleman handed her a card. ‘That’s where I live. Come to-morrow at half-past seven. There’ll be a bite of dinner.’ He held out his hand. ‘Good-bye.’

Sadie shook hands with him. She also said ‘Good-bye.’ Then she descended the stairs of the subway, downtown train.

Sadie thought little about Mr. Fellows’s

offer. She had no intention of taking him up. 'Ain't no white man going to get me naked,' she assured herself.

Star Church conceived within its soul the necessity for a new 'plant.' Spacious idea, expensive undertaking. No puny means of money-raising would be adequate to the need and the demand. Parties, dances, and suppers in the 'hall' would not net enough for the purpose of rebuilding, no, not in a hundred years. Something larger than local resources was essential. A new 'plant' was 'a tall order.'

So Star Church joined the Ethiopian Inter-urban Mutual Assistance Association, more exactly described as the 'Pan-Social and Inter-denominational Union.' A huge organization embracing scores of 'units' in a dozen large cities, headquarters and dynamic center in Harlem. The large affairs and syndicated interests of the "'Sociation' were controlled by a 'Board.' When the Star Church 'joined,' Reverend Rand was nominated to a seat on the Board. It was the pride and boast of the congregation to have him there.

The "'Sociation' managed things on a grand scale. Any 'unit' participating in a "'Sociation

activity' secured a proportionate percentage of the profits. The Star Church 'signed up' for a number of 'activities.' The congregation was quite taken out of itself. No local ruts. They paid the handsome 'Membership Premium' and debouched with zest on the 'activities.' They were many and they were varied.

On the fifteenth of December the 'Mammoth Dance' began. It ran for three consecutive nights in three separate localities, Elizabeth, Harlem, New Rochelle. Star Church conscripted a thousand members for the 'Dance.' Some of the conscripts went to Harlem; some to Elizabeth. They distributed themselves numerically over the three nights. A few went each night.

Peter and Sadie bought tickets for the third night. They elected to go to Harlem, the destination of the *élite*. The tickets were more expensive than those for the Elizabeth 'Dance.' But the Harlem Dance was more 'tony.' From the Star Church busses conveyed the patrons to the dance of their choice and price.

Peter wore a pepper-and-salt suit, and tan shoes, all spang new. Sadie had new clothes too. She put on a green *crêpe de chine*, very

narrow in the skirt and hard to walk in, and a panel of black velvet down the back called 'fish tail.' Sadie was happily conscious of her elegance. So was Peter. He was proud of her. Rightly. He helped her into her ponyskin coat.

The Sons and Daughters of the Ethiopian Eunuch had four busses to themselves for the Harlem dance. Two on the Elizabeth beat. A white cloth sash engirdled each bus. It said 'Mammoth Dance, Harlem,' on one side; on the other 'Sons and Daughters Excursion.' Other societies of the Star congregation also ran special busses. They too were engirdled with white sashes describing the nature of their contents and their destination . . . Elizabeth, Harlem. New Rochelle was too far for Newark people.

The busses left Star Church each night at eight o'clock or something after. They returned when they would. The trip was loud and joyful. Music and food enlivened the ride. Some of the boys had banjos. Although the busses bounced pretty heavily, the passengers sang as loud as they could. When they passed through crowded streets the girls let fly confetti and streamers. Such fun! Free

niggers on a party. Some of the men had 'ticklers' in their hip pockets.

Black Sadie felt very happy. She sat beside Peter. She even took sips from his 'tickler,' but not much. Corn whiskey. She knew all the boys and girls. The mulatto next to her kept his knee pressed closely against hers and sometimes telegraphed with his foot. She let him. What matter? This was a party. They were going to Harlem to the 'Mammoth Dance.'

Niggers . . . it was a relief to Black Sadie to be with her own people. No strain at all. She could relax. 'Art' was hard on the nerves, or, rather, white people were. She rejoiced in the society of the colored people. They demanded nothing but easy happiness, good nature. The jokes were so funny; nobody mystified her with 'high talk.' Sadie did not have to be on her guard with the negroes. Yes, it was very pleasant going to the Mammoth Dance in Harlem.

The bus reached Harlem shortly before ten o'clock. The Sons and Daughters tumbled out, somewhat stiff with the long ride. Peter jumped down before Sadie. The mulatto boy lingered. He assisted Sadie, unnecessarily.

He slipped his arm under hers so that the tips of his fingers found the swell of her breast. Sadie was aware of the pressure. But she was tired of the mulatto boy. She felt no response towards him. His male touch did not arouse her. On the curb Peter reclaimed her.

The dance was in an armory. Very large. Peter and Sadie separated in the vestibule to go down to the dressing-rooms to leave their wraps. The dressing-rooms were full of people. Sadie checked her hat and coat and came out again immediately. Peter also checked his hat and coat, but he tarried a moment to take a swig from his 'tickler.' Tobacco smoke was dense in the men's dressing-room. Many were drinking. In the lavatory four bucks were shooting craps. Some sporting 'guys' went about enticing the unwary to cards. Peter refused. 'Does I look 'at simple?' he asked. The fellow gave him an ugly look. He departed with a mere grunt for retort.

The dance-floor was enormous. In the center, in a railed-off pen, a brass band blared. Very loud, but not too loud for the size of the hall. The musicians wore sumptuous uniforms, much gold lace, many tassels. The leader had a gigantic silver baton. He manipulated it

marvelously, never still, twirling, flashing. He twisted and turned himself about in a frenzy. He shouted and sang. He wore a very high red silk hat. Around the sides of the hall were boxes for observers and refreshment booths. Flags and bunting everywhere. Carnival.

Mammoth Dance in Harlem. So many people, swarming. Hundreds of couples, dancing. The band crashed, savage rhythms, rag-time. Streams of people arriving. Niggers dancing. What heat! What an odor of sweat and drink and food! Floods of sputtering white light.

Peter and Sadie moved slowly about in the swaying crush. In a minute or two the mulatto boy touched Sadie on the shoulder. Break. Peter grinned and dropped aside. Sadie saw him later dancing with a fat girl in a watermelon red dress. The girl shone with happiness. But Peter seemed bored. Sadie did not know who the girl was.

The mulatto boy pressed close to Sadie. They one-stepped in a sleepy way, and the boy tried to talk. He stuttered. Sadie could not understand what he said. There was too much noise anyway, music, shuffling feet,

voices. The boy held her much too tightly. It was hard to breathe. His eager sensuality made Sadie feel sick. Revulsion. No pleasure. As soon as she saw Peter again, she broke away from the dance to rejoin him. The mulatto boy protested. He was vexed. He offered Peter a drink.

Most of the men were drinking. Whiskey. In the corners. Downstairs in the coat-rooms. But everybody was very good-natured. A little harmless horse-play here and there, now and then. No rowdyism on the dance-floor. The 'floor bosses' watched closely. They hushed up noisy people. Improper dancing was instantly reprovèd.

Peter went to fetch some orange ice. Sadie was so warm. She waited for him by an exit. The crowd from the Star Church was quite lost in this huge throng. There were a great many different kinds of people here.

A tall black man came up to Sadie. He wore a dress suit. A monocle too. On his chin was a white goatee.

'I am Professor Felton,' he said. 'Some one pointed you out to me. We all know who you are. I conduct a conservatory of dramatic music in Harlem . . . voice, instrumental, and

otherwise, what you will. Could I interest you in anything? Recitals every other Monday. Perhaps you will come?' Perhaps. Sadie said she neither sang nor played.

Professor Felton continued: 'No? Do you dance . . . professionally, I mean? I am just perfecting the department of dramatic dancing. Are you acquainted with Miss Florence Miller? She is one of mine. On the stage now. Quite successful. Growing popularity. There she is.' He pointed to a smallish mulatto in peachbloom silk. She was surrounded by girls and young men.

Sadie had never heard of Florence Miller. But she looked at her with interest just the same. Nigger actress! The world held so many wonders.

'Would you like to meet her?' inquired the professor. 'She's with some members of her chorus. They have just come from the show. Do you know many of the people here tonight? The people in that box, the old gentleman with the white hair and the two stout ladies, they are from Jamaica. Visitors in the States. Very rich. I am from the Islands myself.' The professor spoke with proud hauteur. Negroes from the West Indies con-

sidered themselves far above the American 'coons.' 'Harlem is fortunate in having a large society from the Islands.'

Florence Miller shook hands with Sadie. She said she knew all about her... 'such an inspiration to the "race movement."' Sadie was mystified. She did not speak. For answer she lowered her eyelids modestly. 'These are some of my boys and girls.' Florence Miller introduced them. 'I know the Countess Lasci too,' she said. 'She gave us a tea on Sunday. We saw some of the drawings you sat for.'

The professor drew Sadie away. He took her round the promenade. It pleased him to point out notable people... doctors, realtors, teachers, lawyers, all colored, but some very light. 'Harlem is a great place,' he said. 'You ought to live here. We need people like you close to the center of the "race movement"... There's Harvey Joe. He owns string quartets in New York and Chicago... several of the large cities. But he lives in Berlin mostly. Those two boys... there under the flag of France... are comedians. They black up. You ought to see their watermelon act and clog dance. That lady in yellow satin is Madame Steel... contralto... finer than Schu-

mann-Heink . . . Handicapped by her race . . . But the day of colored distinctions is nearly spent.'

The professor prattled on. Sadie stepped delicately beside him. She had on her 'white manners.' Fine manners and pure speech. She knew the trick. Veneer. She came up out of the comfortable 'nigger English' all slurs and gutturals as easily as a beaver takes to land. She shifted her behavior and her speech for the professor and his friends because they were different niggers from her kind . . . almost like white folks. The professor was delighted with her. So refined. Black Sadie!

Peter reappeared with the orange ices. He looked suspiciously at the professor. Different class. Sadie introduced 'Mr. Wright.' But Peter was awkward, and Felton froze towards the Newark colored man. Distinctions finely drawn. Sadie was glad to have Peter again. She slipped back happily into the more familiar context of life. She and Peter ate the orange ices. Then they danced some more.

The social tides washed hither and thither through the dance-hall. Currents. Black Sadie found herself again amongst the people from the Star Church. They had a very happy

time together, dancing, breaking; laughing, joking. One of the girls, the fat girl with the watermelon red dress, had too much to drink. She was maudlin. It was fun for the others. She said so many silly things. Amusing, drunk people. But the fat girl enjoyed being made sport of. She tried herself. She got down on all fours and danced around. Her dress dragged about her in such a funny way, down in front, up behind. White cotton stockings, and the green garters showed. The girls made a ring about her, dancing and singing.

The mulatto boy wanted to dance with Sadie again. She refused. So he wept, wiping the tipsy tears from his cheeks with his knuckles. Soon he was comforted. A brawny brown lass took pity on him. Off they went on a foxtrot.

About twelve o'clock a group of white people arrived. There was a parley at the door, then they were shown into a box. The Countess Lasci, Chalmer Neale Truben, Corda Van Corda, and some others. Sadie had seen them at the studio, but she did not remember their names. Mr. Fellows was also in the party. The white people took great interest in watching the dance, but the colored people paid very little attention to them.

The Countess had come with a purpose. She began pointing out people with her fan to Fellows and Corda Van Corda. Chalmer pinned his attention to a pale thin girl in a turquoise-blue dress, hardly any of it. Her body was bony as a cage. The Countess kept ushers busy carrying messages about the hall. She wished to speak to So-and-So. She wanted to meet this or that person. She spied Sadie and waved energetically to her with her fan. So Sadie went up into the Countess's box. Florence Miller came into the box too. She smiled at Sadie.

The hall was stifling hot, the nigger odor strong. The Countess plied a red feather fan and sniffed constantly at her handkerchief with the verbena scent on it. She talked to everybody. Pleasant and loquacious. Some one brought plates of ice cream. Refreshing.

The President of the Floor came up. The Countess was very gracious to him. She asked him a favor.

So a little space was cleared in front of the box. Two of Florence Miller's chorus, a boy and a girl, did a wonderful tango. Then a girl danced alone. She was a contortionist. It was as though she had no spine nor any other bones

in her body. One of the boys did a clog dance. The Countess was delighted. She gave them each a rose from the large bouquet at her waist.

The Countess said things, *sotto voce*, to a stout man sitting beside her. He had a white pasty face and the top of his head was bald, only he brushed the hair from the side over the bare spot so that it did not show. When the Countess spoke to him, he wrote down 'memos' in a little alligator-skin notebook.

When the clog dance was over, the Countess and the fat man and the President of the Floor left the box. They walked around to the other boxes, speaking to the people. Corda Van Corda spoke to Sadie. She twinkled at her with her eyes. Mr. Fellows tried to interrupt, but Sadie avoided his eye.

The band played Victor Herbert waltzes . . . 'Kiss Me Again,' and such like. One of Florence Miller's boys asked Sadie to dance.

He danced beautifully. Sadie sensed at once his strength and grace. No nigger shuffle in him. She fell into step delightedly. He was immaculately dressed in evening clothes. His breath smelled faintly of ginseng. He complimented Sadie's dancing. 'You ought to be on

the stage,' he said. He began to tell her about his life in the theater. They went on tours . . . Chicago, St. Louis, next month the Pacific Coast. He told her about Florence Miller. 'Sometimes she gets angry. Look out! It's terrible. But usually she's a peach. Wonderful!'

One o'clock. Everybody was very happy. The floor was jammed with dancers. Some were dancing with complete abandon. The floor bosses were not so watchful now. Sadie saw some of the Harlem *bonton* leaving. 'They are going to the night clubs,' said her partner. 'Have you ever been to a night club? Would you like to come?'

But Sadie said no. She was timid at heart. New things held little interest for her. She did not want to lose track of Peter. Sadie did not know where Peter was. She had not seen him since she went into the Countess's box. He was near the fat girl then, patting with the others for her bear-like dance on the floor.

People leaving. Was it late? Time to go home? Sadie did not know. Anyway, why bother? Peter would look her up before the busses left for Newark.

The boy Sadie was dancing with drew her

into a corner. He had something in a flask. He drank some. And Sadie drank some. It was not whiskey. It made her feel so very happy. She wanted to dance all night. They went onto the floor again, dancing, bodies locked together, thigh to thigh, cheek to cheek. The boy whispered in her ear, but Sadie paid no attention to what he said. She just felt too happy for anything. She wanted to cry and she wanted to laugh too.

There was a scuffle somewhere near the door. Policemen came in. They carried off two or three men. The clang of the bell on the 'green wagon' could be heard in the hall. But few paid any attention to the interruption. Incidental affair.

The music took on a new turn. Intoxicating. Savage. A woman began to scream with hysterical laughter. Very loud. It was Madame Steel, the black Schumann-Heink. She was quite drunk. A wizened little man in a frock coat tried to quiet her. He tried to get her to leave the hall. But she would not go. The yellow satin dress was wet with beer stains. Madame Steel stopped laughing to weep.

Sadie and the boy had another drink from his flask. The flask was silver with a large

monogram on one side. They stopped dancing and stood close together under one of the boxes. The boy pressed against her, hands on her hips. Male flesh. Female flesh. He took one of Sadie's hands and ran it over his face, kissing the backs of her fingers. Sadie loved him very much. Where was Peter?

The boy said: 'Come downstairs. It's dark in the basement.' He led her away. Sadie was dazed. She did not know where they were going or what for. She followed.

It was dark in the basement. There were people in the shadows. Sadie heard them whispering, breathing. Here and there the red butt of a cigarette glowed. The boy was quite drunk. He wanted to smoke. The light of the match showed many amorous couples in the basement. But the only person Sadie saw was Peter. He was in the arms of the fat girl in the watermelon red dress.

The match went out in a moment. Darkness again. But Sadie broke away from her companion. 'Don't go. Come back,' he called, tipsily, peevishly. Somehow she stumbled out of the cellar. She found her way to the hat-and-coat-room. She got her hat and coat and put them on. Then she sat down on the edge

of a locker, wringing her hands and sobbing, 'Peter! Peter!' Some kind person came with a wet handkerchief, mopping her face. A drink of cold water.

Sadie did not know how she got home. She remembered nothing. Doubtless some of the Star people had got her into the bus and seen her to her door. Very kind. Sadie slept until nearly noon.

Some one knocking on the door. Peter. The door was locked. Sadie would not let him in. He begged and pleaded. His voice was very sad and weak. Sadie upbraided him: 'Where's yo' fat bitch?' she asked. But after a while she opened the door. Peter came in and went to bed.

In the afternoon Sadie dressed, packed her clothes, and went to New York. Peter slept at home. Righteous Sadie would not go back to Peter. She knocked at the door of Amelia Rogers's studio.

With the advice and assistance of Amelia Rogers, Sadie established herself in a room on Ninth Avenue, at the back of the house. The crash of the 'L' hardly disturbed her at all.

Sadie enjoyed her independence. She did

not miss Peter. Doubtless he now had the fat girl for his wife. Virtuous Sadie motivated by jealousy. But she was no psychologist. She did not split hairs, nor probe her soul. She was well done with being 'married.' The far horizons of a career inflamed her eye: it was better to be free.

Sadie enjoyed living in New York. Amelia Rogers took her shopping. Macy's. Gimbel's. Sometimes Wanamaker's and Altman's. It was nearly Christmas-time. Shopping was very, very entertaining.

One day Sadie passed a lady in a crowded aisle in Gimbel's basement. On the lady's dress dangled a stone-set pin, unfastened, loose. What an easy chance! Sadie turned and pressed by the lady again. The pin was in her hand. But the lady felt the theft. She set up a great clamor. Floor-walkers hurried up. Clerks exclaimed. A policeman appeared as if by magic. 'A colored woman passed by me twice,' proclaimed the lady. 'She must have taken my pin. Where has she gone?'

But Sadie had walked quickly out of the store. Reflected in the glass of the swing-door she saw a floor-walker hurrying after her. Sadie felt her knees grow weak. What now?

On the curb a Christmas Santa Claus guarded an alms-pot hanging on a tripod. He rang a bell continuously. Children stopped to shake hands with him and drop pennies in the pot. Passers-by sometimes threw in nickels and dimes. Sadie dropped the pin into the pot and quickly walked away. The crowd was dense. It was some time before she was sure she was not followed.

Christmas Day . . . clear, cold. The wind blew dust and grit along the surface of the streets. Wisps of fetid steam seeped from sewer holes. In the afternoon Sadie put on a new tailored suit. She proposed to herself to walk on Fifth Avenue and later turn in at the Countess Laschi's. The Countess was giving a Christmas tea to some of her white protégées and negro friends from Harlem. Whites and blacks together. A new experience to New York people. Both sides of the color line felt the prick of so novel a pin.

Sadie boarded the Ninth Avenue 'L' at Christopher Street. The train of yellow cars banged uptown. At Forty-Second Street Sadie came down the iron stairs. She intended taking a surface car crosstown to the Avenue.

On the bottom step sat a colored man, huddled up, doubled over. Very sick. Drunk. Disgusting animal. Sadie drew aside her skirts to pass him by. But she did not pass him by, for the man gave a groan and rolled over, face up, and Sadie recognized Mr. Lowry. A sort of tremor or convulsion shook him. Wretched man.

Sadie hailed a taxi. She and the driver hoisted Mr. Lowry onto the seat. He was sick again. Sadie held his head to the window. 'Where to, lady?' 'Bellevue clinic.' Sadie opened her reticule. Twelve dollars, but more at home and in the bank. Sadie was very proud of her first bank account. Checking and savings.

At the clinic an interne and a nurse took charge of Mr. Lowry. Sadie waited in the passage. Pretty soon the nurse came to speak to her.

'Bad case of alcoholic poisoning. Are you responsible? Are you his wife?'

'He married my cousin,' answered Sadie. 'I found him just now in the street, sick, so I brought him here. Yes, I'm responsible.'

What was Lowry to her? Less than nothing; but she hadn't the heart to leave him. Sadie followed the nurse into the ward. Mr. Lowry

lay in bed. He whined and moaned, but he was not conscious. Tremors shook his body. On his head was an ice-pack. Sadie felt truly sorry for him. Patients in neighboring beds craned their necks to see the newcomer. Would he get well? Conjectures yes and no. But the nurse would not say.

Sadie felt quite sickish after her nasty experience and from the universal smell in the hospital of iodoform. She went out in the corridor and sat for half an hour on a bench. Nobody paid any attention to her. What use her waiting? She called the nurse, gave her name and address, also the Countess Laschi's telephone number. 'I'll be there until after six o'clock,' she said.

Sadie walked a block or two to restore her nerves and her stomach. Then she called a taxi. How easy to pick up the metropolitan manner . . . taxis and the like. White folks and 'art' work a subtle metabolism in the nature. Black Sadie! She drove to the brownstone front in Park Avenue where the Countess Laschi lived.

The Countess did nothing by halves. She felt committed to her hobby for exploiting the negro. She pushed her new fad with vigor. On

Christmas Day the Jacobean library and the Louis Quinze drawing-room and all the other 'period' rooms on the lower floor of the brown-stone front swarmed with guests. Black and white. Harlem society. New York Bohemia, or some of it. In the library a punch-bowl; in the drawing-room tea; and in the dining-room eggnog. Soft-coal fires in all the rooms, wreaths in the windows, tall red candles on the tables and consoles, and the Countess Lasci with her mounds and mounds of white hair.

When Sadie came in, Madame Steel was singing, lifting her double chins and shaking her deep bosom. An anæmic white girl played the accompaniment. She had turquoise rings on her emaciated fingers. The Countess came to Sadie with outstretched hands. 'So late! Where have you been? Merry Christmas!'

Madame Steel came to the end of the *Erl König*. The professor from the conservatory of music in Harlem grasped her hand. Corda Van Corda applauded. Everybody clapped. 'Divine!' Madame Steel smiled and bowed. She was rather out of breath. Punch restored her.

The Countess smote her palms together. 'We are going to the studio now,' she announced. 'We were only waiting for "Black

Sadie" to come. You are to view the pictures for the Winter Exhibition before the public has a chance. They will be sent away tomorrow.

The company trooped upstairs to the fourth floor.

The Countess uncovered the pictures. The guests exclaimed.

'There!' cried the Countess. 'These pictures will revolutionize the viewpoint of the old conventional conception of art in mood and technique. They will create a crisis.'

The guests exclaimed again and clapped their hands.

Chalmer explained some of the more abstruse ideas underlying his work. Mathematical esoterism. He acknowledged in Sadie the inspiration to effect his artistic ideals. He talked at some length. One or two people became restive. Corda Van Corda could be heard whispering aloud to Fellows. But the Countess's attention was fastened on Chalmer. Sadie became aware of standing next to the heated person of Madame Steel. The black diva pressed her hand. 'Wonderful!' she whispered. Then to Sadie directly: 'When are you coming to see me? My daughter is so anxious to meet

you. She is an invalid . . . confined to her room. She writes poetry. We are so anxious to have you meet some of our Harlem friends.'

A Japanese boy handed around a tray of cocktails. The Countess proposed the health of the artist and his model. Chalmer and Sadie had to stand up together on the platform. Everybody cheered. 'Viva!' they shouted. 'Brava!' The cocktails were very good.

The Countess drew Sadie aside. She explained to her that her work as a model was ended. After the exhibition of Chalmer's pictures, any posing she did would be only commercial. The Countess begged Sadie not to cheapen herself. Sadie said nothing. She waited for a dénouement of the Countess's reasons. Besides, she had no words with which to cope with the unsettling eulogisms heaped upon her.

'Your future is on the stage. My dear friend, Mr. Isaac Sacks, the theatrical manager and producer, wishes to make you an offer.' She hailed Mr. Sacks.

The pasty-faced man, who had been with the Countess at the Harlem dance, sidled over to the Countess's side. He offered Sadie a job on the stage . . . a revue just going into rehearsal.

Fifty dollars a week, and expenses. Would she consider it?

Sadie was perplexed. What should she say? Must she accept or refuse on the spot? But at the moment the Japanese boy called her to the telephone.

Bellevue Hospital. Patient dying.

Sadie left at once for the hospital.

Mr. Lowry was still unconscious, but he talked fitfully. 'Oh, my lawsy, lawsy,' he said. 'Oh, my lawsy, lawsy. I'se canned dis time sho'.' His breath came quick and fast. The orderly came with white linen screens to close in the bed. The end must be near. 'Oh, my lawsy, lawsy, Al!'

Sadie sat down on the white iron chair beside the bed. So Mr. Lowry was dying? Odd for her to have picked him up. Where could Quecene be? Mr. Lowry groaned and gagged. Sadie thought she ought to pray or sing. Too bad to 'pass over' without being 'eased across the river.' She began to croon, very softly, and sway her body. Deathbed mystery. Nigger passing.

At midnight Mr. Lowry died.

One afternoon as Sadie stepped down the

stoop of the brownstone front, she met Mr. Fellows coming up. He lifted his upper lip at her.

'Well, my girl,' he said, 'you didn't know a good thing when you had it. It's too late now. The Exhibition is in two weeks. I hate to rob the Countess of her glory, but her Euclidian artist hasn't a show.' He banged up the steps. Out of temper. But whatever could he mean? How should Sadie know?

Sadie walked slowly down Park Avenue to Fiftieth Street. Some one behind her. Surely Fellows would not be following her. Sadie glanced furtively over her shoulder, but she could not see who it was. She tightened her hold on her handbag. Still footsteps evenly paced behind her. Ahead rose the flimsy bulk of Saint Patrick's Cathedral. In went Sadie at the side door.

After the bright evening light of the street it seemed almost black in the Cathedral. Sadie paused inside the door. She had never been in a 'white folks' church before, not a big one like this . . . and the Catholics, would they put her out? What's in here, anyway? People coming and going, noiselessly, praying, lighting votive candles. The candles sparkled

before the shrines, red, yellow, white, green. Somewhere an official sing-song droned peevishly, perfunctorily. The chancel looked like a hotel lobby . . . green carpet, gold chairs, and the long altar for the clerk's desk. A dim corridor ran around behind.

Sadie made for the corridor. She mounted the two or three steps from the floor of the nave to the level of the ambulatory. People passed her, going and coming. Some one caught her arm.

Peter!

How crazy he looked! His clothes weren't nice. His eyes bloodshot. Breath heavy with liquor.

Sadie jerked away. 'Nigger, you lay offen me!'

But Peter clutched her closer. Sadie struggled. There was a scene. People came running. A man in a black gown fetched up a policeman in a hurry. So many people pushing together all at once. Peter was hauled off. It involved quite a scuffle.

Somehow, in the *mêlée*, Black Sadie pushed her way through the crowd. She was not the object of attention; it was Peter, cursing, fighting. Sadie found her way out at the big west

door. Safe! Up and down the Avenue, busses. Sadie rode inside one down to Washington Square.

Poor Peter!

But Black Sadie took care to be more watchful on the streets in the future. No nigger man was going to 'nab' her. She was free!

Black Sadie!

The Cage of Lions changed hands. The proprietress, Ada, sold out to get married. She married a Brazilian. He was a professional dancer. They departed for Paris for life, or so they said. Who knows? The new owner wrote **CONSTANCE** in large green letters under the title on the shield supported between the paws of two red wooden lions. This ensign flapped on wires outside the entrance to the restaurant. And business proceeded as usual.

Constance was full of ideas. She enclosed the cashier in a cage. The waitresses wore lionskin mantles with papier-maché heads on top of their own. She herself appeared as tamer, in short skirts and red leather boots, in her hand a long lash. Private eating-booths made like cages ranged down one side of the establishment — five of them. And the

dancing-space was enclosed by painted wooden barricades like a circus ring. Greenwich Village was greatly intrigued by the arrangement. So unique. The Cage of Lions was thronged. Business was excellent.

But not so the food. Here the new management fell down. Ada built her reputation on the cooking, but Constance seemed to think wooden bars and tawny waitresses more important. Stage-setting. But the habitués of the Village wanted food. They wanted it good. And they wanted it cheap. The Cage of Lions had poor food and uptown prices. That would not do. Business began to languish. Other misfortunes followed.

At Christmas-time the cook struck. One night a little fire started. Two buckets of water would have settled it, but the guests got in a panic and some one turned in an alarm. The firemen drenched the place. They did considerable damage. It was a week before business could be resumed. In the interim the customary patrons sought sustenance at a neighboring 'joint' called the Tin Spout. The Tin Spout majored in delectable Mexican dishes. It was the only place in New York where pulque was attainable.

Just as things started up again at the Cage of Lions, the cashier came down with diphtheria. The City Health Department locked the doors. It was several days before the official disinfecting was done. Constance beat her breast, but it did no good. She had to wait the lifting of the official ban.

The first night after the quarantine was raised, the police raided the place. That frightened the patrons very much, particularly the ladies. The police arrested an inoffensive young man who that day had somehow got away with a large number of bonds from a downtown banking establishment. How he was traced to the Cage of Lions, nobody knew. It was the concern of the secret service men. Anyway they came. Business was ruined for the evening.

People began to talk about the Cage of Lions. It had got a bad name. Constance faced failure.

Amelia Rogers deeply sympathized with Constance. So many misfortunes. 'Born for ill luck. Poor girl, just divorced and her way to make. Too bad.' Now Amelia also faced failure. It was chronic with her. But the Countess usually came to the rescue . . . with

rent . . . with clothes . . . bills. But the best of natures wearies. Amelia had reason to suspect the Countess's assistance might not be forthcoming in the future. Amelia sought to line her nest before that day arrived.

She thought out plans. They were feeble enough. But at last a stroke of genius inspired her. Amelia set out for the Cage of Lions to visit her friend, ostensibly to sympathize with her in her many woes, but really to spread before her a business proposition.

Amelia set out for the Cage of Lions. On the way she encountered Black Sadie returning from God-knows-where. But Amelia had no interest in where she had been. Amelia preferred not to dwell on 'has-dones.' The point of the moment was, would Sadie turn with her to visit Constance? Sadie would. They walked down Hudson Street together. Amelia related the sad story of Constance. But her innermost thoughts she did not tell to Sadie. Later. Just now Sadie's corporeal presence was sufficient.

They turned off Hudson Street into a by-way and came to the Cage of Lions. Sad sight within. No patrons at all. The cashier sat idle within her cage. Now and then she ten-

tatively manicured her nails. The lionesses fluttered meaninglessly near the service door. And Constance wept with her head on a table, her tamer's whip across her knees.

'Constance!' cried Amelia.

And Constance raised her head. A disheveled sight. But Sadie recognized her and she recognized Sadie. Timothy Fisher's wife! What a coincidence!

Amelia demanded food. Constance herself lighted the yellow candle on the table, brought in the soup, and poured out glasses of chianti.

'Your health!' said Amelia, lifting her glass to Constance.

'Lord knows I need it,' said Constance. 'I certainly am Calamity Jane.' She recounted her woes. She dwelt despairingly upon her misfortunes. She itemized her losses. Calamity Jane!

Sadie was glad to see Constance. She had always liked her. She listened to her story with avid interest. It was amusing to hear of the Fishers again. So Constance had divorced Timothy? Or was it the other way around? No matter. Here she was, and in a fix too. Poor Constance. Sadie deeply sympathized with her.

Amelia sipped some wine. She quite soiled a white china silk waist with tomato purée, spattered carelessly. She listened patiently to all Constance had to say, or nearly all, then she broached her plan. Amelia pointed out that the Cage of Lions seemed to be 'hoodooed,' under a curse.

'You ought never to have kept the name,' she said. 'It's bad luck in the Village.'

'Now the thing for you to do is to start fresh,' the oracle continued.

'I have,' interrupted Constance. She let a spoon fall to the floor, and wept in consequence. Nervous woman. 'I began this business not six weeks ago. Now look where I am. Ruined!'

'The thing for you to do is to start fresh,' persisted Amelia. 'Change the name of the "joint." Alter the style. Feature something.' Amelia paused to cope with a piece of gristle in her mouth. The food was not good. 'You must serve good food. Your "hash" has an unsavory reputation. Pun!' she cried.

'Oh, Amelia, how witless you are!' sighed Constance. 'Greenwich Village has exhausted the possibilities of novelty. The saturation point is reached. There are already too many eating-places. I'm broke.'

‘Hear me out,’ protested Amelia. ‘I came here with a definite idea. It’s a wonderful plan. I make it as a business proposition.’

The cashier left her cage. ‘I am going to get my dinner now,’ she said, and sat down at a table in a corner. One of the little lionesses brought her the tray of hors d’œuvres. She took an olive and a little caviar. The little lioness retired to the kitchen, trying to preserve her ‘kangaroo walk’ despite the flapping lionskin. Did she not realize that the ‘kangaroo walk’ was quite out of date . . . the era of shirtwaists and skirts and thrust-out pompadours?

‘Now, this is my plan,’ said Amelia. ‘I propose that you take Sadie and me into partnership.’

Constance quailed at the thought.

But Amelia explained how that she herself would do the cooking. She said she was a good cook if nothing else. She also explained how popular and well known Sadie had become with Bohemians. She was likely to be more so after the Winter Exhibition. But Sadie’s capacities as a model were limited. In art her future uncertain. It would be better for her to tie up to a good business.

'I am going on the stage,' cut in 'Sadie laconically.

'Sheer gamble,' answered Amelia. 'You may and you may not. Sacks might bounce you at the first rehearsal. Besides, you haven't signed a line of contract yet. Wait till you do before you talk.' Amelia was sharp, even acid.

'Now, do something new,' continued Amelia. 'Everybody is going crazy about the negroes. Use the idea. Use Black Sadie. Let me explain. Listen. The Cage of Lions has a bad name, as experience has proved. It suggests raw meat and rapacious overcharging. Serve better food. Charge minimum prices. But change the name. Call it "The Jungle Book"...everybody has read that. Paint the front to look like an open book...texts from Kipling...and inside turn it into a jungle. Just! Have a tiny orchestra of African instruments played by colored boys...perhaps in gee-strings...flutes, tom-toms, cymbals. And now and then Sadie...on a little stage...a little dance...or a mysterious negro melody, a spiritual or something like that. Sadie could do it. Wouldn't it be wonderful!'

‘People are fed up with coon songs,’ said Constance.

‘But wait,’ begged Amelia, biting the edge of a baked potato skin. ‘Give the public an eyeful. Dress Sadie up in mostly nothing . . . banana leaves or some grass. Feature “Black Sadie.” Sometimes let her dance . . . some jungle rhythm, some savage, abandoned fling. People from uptown will pack the place. Draw the art students. At stated hours let Sadie pose . . . free . . . the famous negro model.’

Amelia gazed excitedly at Constance and Sadie. Constance seemed tempted. Sadie appeared altogether nonplussed.

‘Greenwich Village . . . revue . . . cabaret . . . art school, all in one; all in the Jungle Book.’ Amelia clasped her hands. She was in love with the thought.

‘I can’t,’ said Constance. ‘I’ve got to give up.’ She put her hands to her face, weeping convulsively.

‘Why?’ demanded Amelia.

‘Because I have. I’ve got to get out. I’m done for. I haven’t told you the worst.’

Amelia was aghast. ‘Are you in trouble with the police?’

‘No; the doctors. I’m going to have a baby!’

Amelia and Sadie shouted with laughter.

'Just got my divorce, too. And going to have a kid . . . after all the care I took. Oh, I'm in such trouble. I'm so miserable.'

But this was merely hysterics. Amelia felt that she had won. She had won with Constance. But could she bring Sadie into play? The nigger girl was so secretive. She was so sly. Amelia could never tell what she thought or what she would do.

'We'll make large fortunes. Sadie, you'll be rich! It's the greatest chance of your life. Are we agreed? I'll get a contract form and bring it around to-morrow.'

The Jungle Book. Black Sadie. Could Amelia put it through?

A note addressed to Miss Sadie Ritchie. It was from the professor in Harlem. Would she come to a recital at the Conservatory of Music and Dancing? The day and the hour were named. Sadie put on an apple-green frock with bronze leather belt and bronze buttons. Then she set out for Harlem. Subway, Fourteenth Street. Uptown.

Sadie walked east on Fourteenth Street to Broadway. At the entrance to the subway was

Lucy. Unexpected meeting. She stood very, very close against a tall young man. She had not changed at all. She wore the usual abundance of slatternly finery. Sadie was trim and modish. Lucy put up a miserable contrast.

The tall young man idled against the railings and Lucy leaned against him. She talked and he listened, or seemed to. He wore a brown derby hat, rather over one eye, and his light tan clothes were the essence of elegant cheapness. The trousers fitted tightly, especially the thighs and the knees, while toward the ankles they flared out bell-shaped over the highly polished patent-leather shoes. Congress gaiters. Young nigger buck. New York sporting man. City coon.

Lucy greeted Sadie lovingly. She showed all her teeth. She had two new gold ones. Expensive and shiny. She had lost the originals in a row. 'Meet my fellow,' said Lucy, drawing away from the dressy young man. 'His name's Marcus.' Marcus straightened up. On Sadie he bestowed a single languid and insipid leer. 'Girl from Newark,' said Lucy of Sadie.

Marcus slouched down again. He had no need of effort where women were concerned. Dude. Lady-killer. He was tall; light brown;

beautifully muscular. His person invariably pleased the female eye. He never doubted but he would please Sadie. Women sought his charms and favors, not he theirs. Marcus.

Lucy inquired into Sadie's health. She stated her own. So-so. Lucy was replete with curiosity and gossip. She had not seen Sadie for a long time. So much to learn and tell. She set about it.

What made Sadie leave Peter Wright? Peter was a good fellow. All the girls loved him. Lucy herself would gladly have 'kept' Peter. Many others likewise: to wit, Quecene. Quecene had been crazy about Peter. She had tried to get him more than once. She was jealous of Sadie. She thought if she had Sadie 'in her house,' Peter would come too. But Peter 'hadn't no use' for anybody but Sadie. Somebody had said that Fat Fanny had got him at the dance in Harlem. Nabbed him when he was drunk. But Lucy didn't know if there was any truth in the report. Lucy said Peter had nearly pined away after Sadie left him. He used to go to church every night and prayed and wept. He 'took to drink' for Sadie.

Such words were balm in Sadie's ear. She listened avidly. Often since the afternoon

when Peter followed her into the Cathedral had Sadie regretted not having allowed herself to be reconciled to him there. Too late now. Lucy said Peter had got into trouble over something . . . been a week in jail. That had cost him his job with the Post Office. Lucy had heard he was now on the railroad, porter in the Pullman, or 'sumpin'.

How did Lucy know all these things? Oh, everybody at the Star knew them. Lucy was a member of the Star Church now. The affair of Sadie and Peter was the talk of the 'plant.' 'People said you'd run away with er nuther fellow. Some said a white man had you.' The thought distressed Sadie because it was untrue. She turned the conversation. The languid dandy was listening too keenly.

Sadie asked about Quecene. 'Oh, Quecene!' said Lucy nonchalantly. 'She sho' wuz handed er lemon. Er white jedge give her two years in de pen fer runnin' er disorderly house.' Lucy stated the case calmly, philosophically. It did not concern her, Quecene's crime and punishment. 'She won't be out fer er long time yet.'

And what of the Star? The Ladies of the Valley of Israel; the Dime-a-Day; the Hope-a-Little? Sadie had not paid her dues for months.

She 'expected' she was 'kicked out.' Not at all. Lucy belonged to the 'cieties' herself. She knew all about the matter. Peter had paid Sadie's dues for a year ahead. Sadie felt a lump rise in her throat. Faithful Peter, blessed Peter. Would she ever see Peter again?

But Lucy could not deflect her attention from Marcus. She took his hand. It had a diamond ring on one of the fingers. Marcus seemed superior to Lucy's endearments and caresses. He languidly withdrew his hand and lighted a cigar. Lucy leaned strongly against him, in the hollow of his arm. 'He knows how ter love,' she said. 'He's mer very own darlin'.' Marcus allowed one eyelid a quiver in order to indicate to Sadie his indifference to Lucy's love. Then he gave Lucy a little shove away from himself onto the railings of the subway entrance. Sadie thought it time to go.

In Sadie's mouth was a salty taste. Peter! She wished she could see him. Suddenly she felt disinclined to go to Harlem. If only she might be going to Newark instead, going to Harrison, in at her door to Peter. But the howling subway train carried her swiftly up-town towards Harlem.

She was late at the recital. A colored boy

about fifteen years old opened the door for her. He gave her a chair just inside the door. It was the kind of chair undertakers set up in parlors for their own gloomy purposes. The professor sat on the stage. His chair was a monstrous stationary rocker. The arms were covered with plush, and rows of little tassels hung down. They oscillated as the professor gently rocked.

The professor presided. His pupils played and sang, beginning with the youngest children, spindle-shanked little coons in silk dresses or velvet trousers, and ascending a chromatic scale of ages and sizes until the bulk and power of Madame Steel brought the musical numbers to a finish.

When Madame Steel had sung, there was a recess. The guests conversed together. Tea and biscuits called 'five o'clocks' were handed around. The stage was made ready for the second part of the programme. Dancing. The professor came down the hall to speak to Sadie. Madame Steel beckoned her to a seat beside herself.

'Come to-morrow night to a little private soirée at my house,' she said. 'Just a few friends. Poetry. My gifted daughter will read

some original compositions. Will you come?’

Sadie promised to be there. Harlem people were nice after all.

When the intermission was over, the professor left the stage. He sat down beside Madame Steel. The piano was rolled to one side. All the space was needed for the dancing. A thinnish girl with extraordinarily large calves sat down at the piano. She played Mendelssohn’s ‘Spring Song.’ Four little female coons capered about the stage. The audience clapped when they had done. Winsome dears. They ran down the steps into their mothers’ knees. But they had to go back to dance all over again. Encore.

Some clog dances followed. A Russian gavotte. Some Winter Garden stuff by six bouncing girls. Number followed number in quick succession; the pianist gave the cues: a loud chord meaning ‘Retire’; another loud chord signifying ‘Enter.’ The regimen of the Conservatory was admirable.

The conventional dances disposed of, the artistic *pièce de résistance* brought the recital to a climax. ‘Greek Dance’ . . . ‘steps and poses copied from the buried ceramics’ . . . whatever could that mean? Six mulatto girls in white

nightgowns with jugs on their shoulders. The dance seemed quite stiff in Sadie's eyes. The 'Greek Dance' consisted principally in walking around dragging first one foot, then the other, and sudden halts to shift the jugs. But the audience was very enthusiastic. The 'Greek Dance' had to be done all over again.

The professor stood up. 'Just a little fun to end up with.'

The pianist banged out a rollicking gavotte. A little fat man shuffled rapidly down the stage, his body carried inertly on a pair of immensely alert legs. He was most comical. So droll. His coat-tails dragged on the ground. On his feet a pair of immense loose shoes. On his head a tiny derby hat. How he danced! His body stationary while his feet and legs flew about in every direction, in every possible twist and turn.

Sadie laughed until the tears started from her eyes. She had never seen anything so funny. The professor leaned across the oceanic lap of Madame Steel to explain to Sadie about the dancer. Extraordinary case. A prosperous mortician of the Harlem community. His name was Raggs. He was giving up his business to go on the stage . . . comic dancing. He

had talent that way. A good engagement had recently been offered him.

The dancers mingled with the company for conversation and applause. The professor introduced Raggs to Sadie. He had a gay spirit. He sat down beside Sadie to talk to her. He told her little stories, mostly about funerals, such ludicrous episodes, and all the time he smiled and winked, gesticulating with his hands. His little fat stomach rested comfortably on his knees, his swinging feet just touching the floor.

A clock struck six. Sadie said good-bye to the professor and Madame Steel. The gay mortician retired to change his clothes. It was dark when Sadie came out into the streets of Harlem. Niggers everywhere, not a white person to be seen. Nigger cops; nigger shops; and the drivers in the taxis were niggers too. Nigger city. Harlem.

The next evening Sadie went to the poetry soirée at Madame Steel's. Madame Steel lived in a four-story apartment house. She owned it. Her own lodging was on the first floor. On the door a plate which said: 'Steel: Singing.'

Madame Steel herself opened the door. The

professor, two young school teachers, and the professor's boy formed the company assembled. The gay mortician was not present . . . not in the Madame's social circle. Madame Steel led the way into an inner room. On an invalid's couch lay her daughter, the poetess. A cadaverous female probably thirty years old.

Poetry occupied an hour. All, save Sadie and the professor, read original compositions. Each composition required long explanations and elucidations. Madame Steel herself had done a ballad in three verses. The invalid daughter read sections from an ambitious epic. Other sections had been read at previous meetings; further sections would be offered at future meetings. Poetry *soirée*.

Biscuits with cumquat jelly and coffee for refreshments. The invalid daughter drank a glass of warm milk. The professor lighted a cigar. Cigarettes were offered the girls, the two school teachers and Sadie. They refused. The professor said that was a sign that they were not 'from the Islands.' All the women in the Islands smoked cigarettes. No; they were not from the Islands; no. It seemed disparaging.

Sadie said she came from Virginia. Her grandmother, Aunt Nancy Ritchie, always

smoked a corncob pipe. But she had never acquired the habit. Some *faux pas* about this statement. Instead of vindicating her, Sadie saw at once she was lowered in the eyes of the company. The professor coughed. The two school teachers fell into an absorbing *tête-à-tête*. Madame Steel asked Sadie to come see her 'collection.'

She led Sadie into another room. The chief object of furniture therein was an immense old-fashioned bookcase with glass doors. It was filled with small plaster and metal busts of innumerable musicians and composers. Over the bookcase, hanging side by side, were pictures of Blind Tom and Black Patti. Madame Steel explained who they were. She also showed her an album filled with autographs of singers and performers on musical instruments. Very elevating.

But the real reason of the diva in getting Sadie by herself was to furnish her with a generous amount of sound advice. Madame Steel first bestowed some affectionate remarks and pattings upon her. She told Sadie how beloved she was by herself, the professor, and others 'of our class' in Harlem. But Sadie ought to be warned about 'something.' The 'some-

thing' turned out to be a fear on the part of Madame Steel, and 'others,' that Sadie was giving too much to the white people, not enough to her own race. 'It's the new slavery,' she boomed. 'That Countess and her crowd think they own you. They intend to make themselves rich and famous by means of you. Then they will drop you flat.'

Sadie had never conceived of the matter in that light before. She wanted to remonstrate. She wanted to tell Madame Steel of the excellent opportunities offered her by her white friends . . . the Countess's solicitude for her future, Amelia's plan for the Jungle Book. But Madame Steel silenced her with a wave of the hand.

No! Sadie's real opportunities lay in Harlem. Now, Madame Steel would like to chaperon her. She would introduce her to the best 'Island circles.' Sadie must come to Harlem to live. It was necessary in order to avoid Scylla and Charybdis. Scylla was the impression that was getting about that Sadie intended 'to pass'; Charybdis being her compromising residence in lower New York too near to inferior strata of American negroes.

Sadie pointed out that in the nature of

things it was impossible for anybody to entertain the idea that she could 'pass.' She was much too black. As for the inferior strata, Sadie did not know any of those people up and down Ninth Avenue.

Madame Steel was not convinced. She pursed her lips, puffing them in and out, half closing her sleepy-looking eyes. She was about to proceed to further arguments, doubtless the more weighty ones, when the professor put his head in the door. He wished to say good-night, and might he have the honor of conducting 'Miss Ritchie to the car'? He already had on his Inverness coat. His top hat was in his hand.

The diva said good-bye to her guests. She assured Sadie of her motherly love and interest. She hoped she would consider well the advice given her and act upon it.

Sadie and the professor walked off together. Strangely enough he began at once on the same theme of living in Harlem . . . radiant future, golden possibilities for the colored people, especially Sadie. Now, what was it all about? Why were they all so anxious to have her in Harlem? Sadie couldn't answer such questions. But she wondered very much.

When Sadie came out of the subway at Fourteenth Street, it was very late. After midnight. Not many people on the street. All the shops were closed, many of them dark or very dimly lighted, except one cigar store. As Sadie passed the door, two men came out. One was Marcus, and the other was somebody else. Marcus saw Sadie. Immediately he began to show off for her benefit. He and his companion walked ahead of her. They talked very loud and laughed a great deal. Marcus 'cut the pigeon wing' on the sidewalk. He strutted. He sang. He whistled. All the time he kept his eye over his shoulder to observe the effect on Sadie. Sadie walked unconcernedly forward, slow enough so as not to overtake the two men ahead of her. Soon they turned a corner and disappeared.

At Seventh Avenue Sadie had to pick her way over the plank-paved roadway and loose working materials lying about. She heard the noise of the night shift working on the new subway. At Hudson Street, Marcus reappeared. He greeted Sadie politely. 'You'se Miss Sadie, ain't yer?' he asked. Sadie let him walk beside her. It was not far to Ninth Avenue and Christopher Street. Sadie lived

near by. Marcus was very affable. He broke a bar of Wrigley's chewing gum with her.

At Sadie's door they stood talking. Sadie felt quite at ease with him. The Harlem crowd put her ill at ease. But Marcus was her own kind. They stood together talking. Somehow Sadie thought of Peter, Peter walking home with her to Orange Street, standing in the shadow of the door and talking, holding hands. Companionship. Suddenly Sadie felt very lonely and sad. No Peter. By herself in an empty room.

Cold outside in Ninth Avenue. Why not talk inside? Why not have Marcus in for a little supper . . . coffee, cold chicken, bread? She pushed open the door. Marcus followed. He dropped a little pellet in his coffee.

'What's zat?'

'Same ez sugar. Better. Want one?'

When Sadie waked in the morning, Marcus was gone. Her purse was gone. Many of her clothes and trinkets were gone. Sadie felt very dazed and queer. She leaned her head against the foot of the iron bed. That little pellet in the coffee!

After all, perhaps, it would be better to go to Harlem.

Black Sadie betook herself to Harlem. The professor advised her. Madame Steel gave her eligible addresses. She found lodging with one Mrs. Bremmer. Motherly soul from Alabama. Mrs. Bremmer wore calico dresses somewhat lower in front than behind. And her drawers were more in evidence bunched up in her stockings than her two very thin legs. If her legs were spindling, her body was not, and her heart was as ample as her breast. She called Sadie 'chile' and 'honey.' Sadie began with 'Mrs. Bremmer' in the accepted 'new negro' fashion. But . . . 'Shoo, chile, I ain't no missis. *I'se yo' Aunt Sally.*'

Sadie had a front room on the second floor. Just vacated by a gentleman who had been shot in a neighboring bar-room. But Aunt Sally did not tell her that. It would have been 'bad luck.' Bad thrift too. Aunt Sally devoted her modest two-story house to 'bo'ders.' She herself dwelt somewhere in constricted quarters beside the kitchen. She also furnished meals. Unlimited pie.

Next door to Aunt Sally's on one side was a pool parlor; on the other a mortician's establishment. The abodes of joy and sorrow, the living and the dead, open day and night, Aunt

Sally's in between. A nigger boarding-house.

The evening Sadie moved in she leaned out of the window to take her bearings and observe the vicinity. Almost touching her, likewise leaning out of his window, was the smiling face of the mortician. The same who danced the comic dance at the Conservatory. He was sucking an orange, spitting the pits into the street.

Sadie and Raggs greeted each other as old friends. He reached behind him and within and brought forth from some secret store an orange. Raggs tendered the orange to Sadie. It was pleasant leaning on the window-sills sucking oranges, chatting. The mortician did most of the talking . . . Just a little rest before labor . . . and an orange. Two 'cases' awaiting his attention downstairs now. The funerals would be Thursday. Rather a delicate matter to get two funerals run off smoothly in one day. Yes; business was always good. People had to die. And they had to be buried. It was expensive, yes, but the undertakers must live. However he was not interested in his profession. He would make more money on the stage . . . specialty dancing . . . Scandals. Fol-lies.

The talk was very confidential. Raggs talked. Sadie listened. He told her all about himself. Some of the story was very sad . . . for instance, his struggles as an orphan news-boy . . . the death of his brother-in-law, when the mortician business devolved upon his wife . . . the death of his wife in childbed . . . and now his lonely life, dancing his only solace and joy. At the sad parts, the mortician chuckled. He enjoyed talking about himself.

'I am very religious,' said Raggs, pitting a seed at an alley cat. 'I belong to the Babtist Church. But I would like to be a Jew because that is the oldest religion. I would like to be like my Master in all things. He was a Jew.' He heaved a pious sigh.

But could one be a colored gentleman Jew? Raggs was entirely serious in his intention. He had actually inquired of Hebrew authorities on the matter of changing his faith. He was quite willing to accept circumcision, bath of oil, even synagogue curls and a shawl. But the rabbi listened coldly to his plea. He would not be welcome in the synagogue. He was a nigger. 'Oh, de po' niggers, don't dey have a hell of a time!'

Sadie could not imagine anybody wanting

to be a Jew. As for religion, she was on much more familiar ground with Aunt Sally than she had been since she came North. Aunt Sally was 'good ole Babtist.' She lived her faith hourly. She sang hymns as she worked. Hymns Sadie knew so well: 'If I could I sho'ly would stan' on de rock whar Moses stood'; 'O sinner, don' yer weep, don't yer moan'; and, 'Running from de fiar, 'scaping outer hell.' 'Befo'-de-war religion, chile,' she said. 'None er yer new African Method-ists . . . I'se got *religion* . . . I'se been under de water. Hallelujah!'

Aunt Sally belonged to Carmel Baptist Church. Corrugated iron. Lost midget of a church in the welter of roaring modern Harlem. In Carmel Baptist Church the fervor of the old South clung to the hearts of a few of the passing elder generation. There sinners and repentance maintained their old-time sway. Moaning and glory for all. But so few. An atavistic power drew Sadie into the familiar embrace of the religion of Carmel Baptist and Sally. Lifelong homelike atmosphere. Rest. Understanding. Home. O Virginia! Down South!

But Harlem 'society' laid its powerful hand

on Sadie too. And the suction from downtown whitefolks. The 'Island people' desired her. The Countess and Bohemia claimed her. Clay pigeon shot from a trap, potted at by black and white. Nigger fad. Nigger hobby. Black Sadie.

Sadie frequented recitals and dances at the Conservatory. She attended lectures at the African Forum. She went to poetry soirées at Madame Steel's. Once she went to the theater to see Florence Miller. The undertaker gave her that treat. She was thrilled. 'Them niggers is sumpin'!'

Downtown, the Countess exploited Sadie. She drove with her in the Park. People on the Avenue turned to stare at the distinguished white-haired lady with the neat, coal-black girl beside her. Sadie shopped with Amelia in Wanamaker's, Gimbel's, Macy's. Never an end to shopping. Amelia talked constantly about the preparations under way for the Jungle Book. Sadie listened. But she had signed no contract. The Countess still paid her a salary . . . mere bird lime to hold her . . . Sadie's work of posing at the fourth-floor studio was over.

All waited for the Winter Exhibition. Black

and white alike expected to make a good thing out of Sadie . . . after the Exhibition.

In the mean time Sadie lived in Harlem. She crooned hymns with Aunt Sally. And she leaned on the window-ledge to chat with the affable mortician. He asked her to marry him. He would give her the 'business.' His first wife had been successful at it, why not Sadie? It led into the best homes. Financially, undertaking was good. He could dance while she buried. He hated 'like pisen' to sell the place. Home.

Matrimony with the dancing undertaker? No! . . . Sadie felt bound to refuse . . . on account of his stomach. It was too round and sticking out. It was what Sadie objected to most in the appearance of her neighbor. She really could not think of herself allied to that unwieldy organ. The gay mortician's society was preferable across the window-ledges. Black Sadie said she was sorry . . . yes; but . . . she could not marry him.

The Winter Exhibition. Multitudinous entries, thousands of pictures submitted for judgment to the jury of the Academy. Portraits, studies, landscapes . . . all moods, all

mediums, every school and style. The accepted choices came into the hundreds only, but just so the galleries were crowded with pictures and statues. The selecting jury worked for days winnowing the wheat from the chaff. They boasted of being impartial in the choice of meritorious efforts. They claimed to be broad-minded and fair. Everybody had a chance. Chance, yes; but many had so little luck. Disappointed aspirants charged the jury with excruciating narrowness of taste. Successful ones thought differently. Of course. But how did so many horrors get in?

The Winter Exhibition. New York foregathered to see it. But not until after the press had had the first view. That was unfair. It was unfair to the public because it prejudiced their minds. They came to the Exhibition with opinions already formed, on the bias, because of what they had read in the papers. It was unfair to the press because they hadn't the public opinion to substantiate and control their criticisms. Handicap all round.

But the newspapers tried to play safe. They strove to be conservative and say just what would be expected of them. But conservatism consists in being just one generation behind

the times. So, as regards the Winter Exhibition of the Academy of Design, the newspapers flung ink away on the conventional pictures because they thoroughly understood the terrain. They noticed merely the work of the impressionists, for that was now 'conservatively advanced.' As far as possible they ignored the neo- and post-impressionists because they didn't know what to say. As for cubism, it had them guessing.

However, in the Academy the cubists possessed a place, somewhat remote, off in a corner. But that corner was crowded with devotees of the new school, and the curious. People were beginning to feel an interest in the direction the artistic weather vane seemed to be pointing.

Amidst the cubists' pictures were three of Black Sadie from the brush of Chalmer Neale Truben. Only he hadn't the wit to name them for his model. The titles were high-blown things: 'Niger Woman,' so executed as to look like a checker-board badly mangled and crushed together. 'Study in Cubes,' really, for it looked like a brick chimney falling down. And 'Skull.' That was quite small. Square canvas. Black-and-white paint slabbed on

with a trowel. 'Skull' defied the imagination of man. It resembled nothing whatsoever. Of that Chalmer was most proud. He declared it embodied 'pure mentality.' Fiddlesticks!

The Truben marvels the New York 'Times' pronounced to be incomprehensible. They insulted the human intelligence and the senses. Therefore they were immoral. The 'Herald' said they were 'suggestive,' but avoided saying of what. The New York 'American' described them as 'advanced.' That was quite coy of the 'American.' The Brooklyn papers were still more guarded.

At the heels of the big dailies yapped a horde of smaller magazines and papers, iconoclastic affairs bent on revolutionary propaganda. Neo-art. The pompous dailies, like a herd of elephants, paid no more attention to the smaller fry than if they had been a pack of little dogs.

The Countess Laschi also exhibited three pictures of Black Sadie. Also under fanciful titles. They were hung at a safe distance from the cubists' corner. 'Theme in Black and Red,' an idea easily digested. 'Esclave,' being a mere head-study in charcoal. And 'Sun Goddess.' Three pictures. The Academy felt

bound to concede something to the Laschi. So 'Esclave' received 'Honorable Mention.' There was due praise in the papers, and smudgy pictures of the Countess.

But where was the First Prize?

In the middle room of the Exhibition, on a pedestal, stood a clay model about three feet high. Its title was 'Black Sadie.' She stood straight with head thrown back against the up-raised hands, nude, pliant as an arrow, gazing at the stars, mysteriously searching heaven. The kinky hair bushed out in a savage mop.

This was the First Prize.

Who had wrought so exquisite a thing?
Amelia Rogers.

Amelia Rogers had hoped to have her 'Black Sadie' accepted for the Exhibition. She had expected no 'mention,' much less prize. It had piqued her to do the thing. It had amused her to get the real Sadie. But she feared the Countess's displeasure as a consequence. It was unalloyed poaching. She did not dare go near the Exhibition.

The morning after the Exhibition opened, Amelia scrambled out of bed. On the landing outside her door lay the 'Times.' In the

'Times' Amelia read that 'Black Sadie' had won First Prize. She had to go back to bed. Under the sheet and blankets she trembled, but not with the cold. She felt weak in her spine. She felt weak in her stomach. She refused to see the reporters when they came to the door.

As for Black Sadie, she read the news too. But she was not disturbed. The Countess had told her something done from her would be sure to win a prize. But why had the Countess's pictures failed? Why had not Chalmer Neale Truben's pictures got the prize? What was this Amelia had done? At that question Sadie remembered. She put on her hat and coat and went to find Amelia. Sadie was very angry. Amelia had stolen a march on her. She would never have posed for her if she had dreamed . . .

Sadie Ritchie naked in New York!

Hovering around Amelia's door were the reporters from the papers. Sadie was surrounded. Interviewed. Photographed. What an experience! She tore at the door demanding with tears to be let in. Was she going to be arrested?

At this precise moment the Countess Laschi

arrived. The reporters melted from her path like frost before the sun. They disappeared. The Countess, jet ornaments, jade rings, white hair, and verbena scent, simultaneously entered Amelia Rogers's studio abode. She was radiant.

'My dear Amelia, . . . at last . . . I am overwhelmed . . . felicitations! Think of it . . . an unexpected masterpiece . . . inspiration! Black Sadie, the First Prize! You have salvaged my boast to New York!'

The Countess spied Sadie, hitherto overlooked in the gale of her entry.

'Sadie . . . treasure! Did I not say you would captivate New York! But from what an unexpected angle! Willie was right about you . . . his intuition . . . the theories of prismatic masses . . . solids . . . But whatever he says, I am now convinced that painting must forever be confined to expressing two-dimensional subjects . . . anything else needs a three-dimensional medium. Painting and sculpture! Twin arts.'

The Countess kissed Amelia. She kissed Sadie too. The impact of the impetuous salute carried Sadie off her feet. She sat down hard. Amelia began to get up. One fat bare leg

swung to the floor. She gasped with astonishment. The Countess noticed none of these things. She paced excitedly to and fro.

‘I am so happy,’ she continued. ‘I never really believed I had failed in you, Amelia. Now you have arrived . . . in one leap . . . and you have carried my latest enthusiasm with you. It is miraculous! I am convinced of the great latent possibilities in art through negro mediums. Poor Willie . . . he’s a failure . . . but it’s not my fault. He has run away . . . gone to Quebec for the winter sports.’

Amelia came out of the bed. She began to pick about among her scattered clothes. Sadie came to sufficiently to begin to brew a pot of coffee for her breakfast. The Countess began again.

‘At break of dawn the newspaper men were at my door. I saw them all. The papers will be full of Black Sadie this afternoon. By-the-by, where are the reporters I passed on the landing? Haven’t you had them in? Haven’t you given out anything to the press?’

‘I wasn’t dressed,’ protested Amelia. ‘I couldn’t let them in.’

‘Never mind,’ pursued the Countess. ‘They’ll be sure to come back. They always do.’

You can see them later. You must get into your clothes now. That is the first thing to do. My auto is downstairs. I am going to take you to the Exhibition, and Sadie too. Lunch at my house . . . a few notables and important people to meet you . . . the Prize Committee.'

What a turn of fortune for Amelia Rogers!

Black Sadie had nothing to say. Somehow she seemed to have scored a triumph. She was swept willy-nilly into the Countess's vortex of enthusiasm. Let her garner her laurels.

At the Exhibition everybody ran forward to meet the three women as they entered the galleries. A little impromptu reception was held at the feet of the statue of Black Sadie. Flowers were thrust into Amelia's hands. Flowers were bestowed on Black Sadie. The Countess embraced a bouquet too. Ushers ran up with telegrams on trays. Telegrams for the Countess. Telegrams for Amelia. Congratulations; invitations. And telegrams for Black Sadie. Offers of business . . . would she sign a label for a new perfume, African Rose? . . . would she allow her photograph to be used for some kind of harness oil? . . . would she give interviews to this and that concern and representative enterprise? . . . would she give to that

and this charity? Offers of business. It was very confusing.

The moguls and bigwigs of the art schools were in the galleries. They were introduced. Collectors and connoisseurs were presented. The ring of bystanders thickened. Sadie saw Mrs. Fisher, and Miss Elsie Fisher, and Miss Rosie Fisher struggling to break through the palisades of people.

The French Ambassador arrived. Way was made for him to inspect the First Prize. He met the ladies. The Countess talked to him in French. She held court. The French Ambassador's wife interrupted to assume charge of the situation. She cried: 'Charmant!' and kissed Sadie on both cheeks. 'Charmant!' she chirruped, and kissed the Countess and Amelia too. 'Charmant!'

The Bishop of New York appeared. He made a little speech. He said the statue represented a closer understanding and friendship between the races. He said genius was a gift from God. And he piously voiced several other platitudes. They were received with respect by the bystanders. Exalted wisdom. Inspired predictions. The newspaper men wrote the Bishop's words in little notebooks. They took

snapshots of the Bishop talking to Black Sadie, talking to the Countess, and talking to Amelia. Such versatility and wisdom appeared in picture and print in all the evening papers.

In the wake opened by the Bishop's withdrawal, the Fishers broke through to the center of the reception circle. They surrounded the Countess with family adulation. Exuberance. Compliments. They gazed raptly at Amelia because she sat on a throne of fame. She had 'arrived,' as Miss Elsie Fisher denominated success. On Sadie the Fishers bestowed a wealth of domestic news.

The Countess extracted her protégées from the pressing throng. They departed for lunch in the Colonial dining-room in the brownstone front near the new Grand Central Station.

It had been a very successful morning.

Black Sadie sat before the mirror in her room at Aunt Sally Bremmer's smearing a cream on her face. Madame Steel was close by overseeing the process. Madame Steel had given Sadie the unguent in a little porcelain pot. It was called 'Bloom.' There were testimonials and directions for use on the label . . . unexcelled for dark skins . . . apply liberally and rub into

the pores with the tips of the fingers. The colored people's instinct for oil would have served Sadie better, for 'Bloom' made her look ghastly, purplish, livid. The pink finishing powder enhanced the gruesome effect. Sadie's face took on the unnatural luster of a badly done china-glaze. She herself was not altogether sure of the result, but Madame Steel praised it highly.

Since the notoriety Sadie had attained through Amelia's First Prize, the whole world sought Sadie's favor. But Madame Steel stood between the deceitful world and its would-be victim. She had quite adopted Black Sadie. Even the Countess, who also aspired to be patroness and protectress, could not oust the diva. She managed all Sadie's affairs, opened all her mail, and commented and advised according to her wisdom. It was deep. Sadie herself felt entirely bewildered. So many solicitations, contracts for this and that, plausible schemes for that and this. No end.

But the task of dealing with such a multitude of affairs and opportunities proved too weighty for even so substantial a person as Madame Steel. After a day or two of letters, callers, solicitors, who-not, what-not, she an-

nounced to Sadie that her concerns must be entrusted to professional hands. She knew just the lawyer for the business. Mr. Harvey. His legal advice and protection were indispensable. He would administer Black Sadie's affairs. 'I cannot allow you to be rooked,' boomed Madame Steel. But why was she so solicitous?

She came herself to accompany Sadie to the office of the lawyer. She presided over the toilette proper for so important an occasion. Soon Sadie had completed the alteration of her complexion from black to blue, put on her ponyskin coat, and was ready to go with Madame Steel to interview the legal gentleman recommended by sundry reputable acquaintances of Harlem. The gentleman, by letter, promised the most exact services and honorable administration of all Sadie's public affairs, opportunities, and concerns. The Countess had made Amelia deliver herself into legal hands, and Amelia had wished Sadie to seek the protection of the same firm of barristers. But Harlem forbade. Madame Steel at that time had felt entirely competent to manage Sadie herself. Now that she was out of her depth, she made a point of employing a negro lawyer. Whites for the white, and blacks for

the black. Thus Harlem. Racial loyalty. And Sadie acquiesced.

On the legal gentleman's desk was a card framed in a narrow mahogany frame. It said 'Keep Smiling.' The advice seemed the beginning of legal good counsel. It was meant for clients, evidently. It faced them. Behind it, on the other side of the desk, sat the barrister. He never smiled. A smile would have cracked his face. He rarely spoke; when he did, it was with the lips alone, for he kept his teeth fast clamped together. One of them was gold; the rest decayed yellow.

But Madame Steel talked a great deal. She stated Sadie's case explicitly. 'This dear innocent girl . . . sudden fame and importance . . . she must be protected with the whole strength of the law from the sharpers and shy-sters bent on destroying her interests and opportunities.' All the time the Madame talked, the lawyer listened, tapping the edge of his desk with a long blue pencil. No flicker of expression crossed his countenance. Sadie's either. She sat silent and composed as the Sphinx.

When Madame Steel had exhausted her tale, Mr. Harvey applied the point of his pencil to

his golden tooth. He muttered a sentence or two, pushed a legal form across the desk, and thrust a pen into Sadie's hands. 'Contract. Sign on the dotted line.' 'Sign,' commanded Madame Steel. And Fate commanded 'Sign.' So Sadie signed the contract delivering into Mr. Harvey's keeping all her legal and business affairs.

Mr. Harvey scrutinized the contract, blotted it, and stood up. He was very tall and spare. He wore a cutaway coat and gray trousers. His shoes were highly polished, but not so highly as to conceal the transeptal bunions. On his little finger he wore the ring of some fraternal lodge. He passed his hand smoothly over his Poroed head, and then shook hands with Madame Steel and the new client. Madame Steel delivered up the accumulation of letters and circulars that belonged to Sadie. She smiled broadly, complacently. Mr. Harvey did not smile. He said: 'Come to-morrow at ten o'clock.' The interview was over. 'Keep Smiling' said the framed motto on the desk. 'Keep Smiling.'

Fame winged Amelia Rogers. She flopped helplessly. The Countess picked her up and

put her in her game bag. She assumed charge of Amelia. As Madame Steel did for Sadie, so the Countess did for Amelia. She dominated her, for success had quite demoralized the poor soul. The Countess made Amelia put her affairs into legal hands. Her work was copy-righted.

Amelia was quite unstrung by excitement and notoriety. The Countess made her remove to her house in Park Avenue. 'The Village reeks of poverty and despair,' she said. 'Get out of it.' Amelia was glad to do so.

'All these letters from Constance,' said Amelia, shuffling a handful of missives. 'I am sure I don't know what to do about her. Of course I can't go on with that Jungle Book plan. Black Sadie wouldn't want to now. She didn't in the beginning.'

'Amelia, you are raving,' pronounced the Countess. 'Whatever are you talking about?'

'An eating-house,' said Amelia.

'Are you hungry?' asked the Countess.

'No; Constance,' answered Amelia.

Nothing to be got from that explanation. The Countess relapsed into her own letters. Amelia fingered the packet of Constance's correspondence, then dropped it into the waste-

basket. 'She'll have to carry on herself,' finished Amelia.

In point of fact Amelia and the Countess were sorting out their affairs before sailing for a little holiday in Europe. England; France. A brief trip during Lent. 'Amelia needs the rest and change badly,' said the Countess. 'She's quite unstrung by all the excitement of the past few weeks.' Amelia was. She did need the rest. She was glad to go.

So Amelia and the Countess sailed for Europe. Sadie came down to Pier 57 to see them off. Madame Steel and Florence Miller came too, and Bohemians . . . Corda Van Corda, Fellows, and others. The Countess stood on the deck in a mink coat and her hands full of red roses. Beside her Amelia in a new tailor-made suit that did not fit her anywhere. She flourished a three-pound box of Huyler's chocolates. The tugs nosed the liner out of her berth into the river, and the faces of those on the decks and those on the dock blurred out of recognition to one another. The waving and hallooing ended. Corda Van Corda invited the party to go to her apartment for tea and a cocktail. But Sadie said she had an engagement with the dressmaker which she must keep first.

She would look in later and motor home with Madame Steel.

But Sadie had no dressmaker's engagement. She had planned to go to see Constance to settle with her privately about the Jungle Book. Like Amelia, she had received a snow-storm of letters from Constance on the subject of the change of scheme at the Cage of Lions. But Sadie had no intention of accepting Constance's proposals. Neither did she intend that Harvey should see the letters, for Constance wrote frankly about her pregnancy in terms of extraordinary impropriety. Curses mostly. She explained in detail just what she expected of Sadie as decoy for patronage to the Jungle Book. So the delicately constituted Sadie considered it better to settle the matter out of court.

She walked slowly down West Street. Two heavy currents of vehicular traffic poured past her in opposite directions. On the river-side stretched the almost unbroken line of dock-sheds and piers; on the other the frontage of miserable saloons, dives, squalid stores, stevedores' hang-outs, and warehouses. The afternoon was cold. The afternoon was fine. Sadie walked briskly.

She proceeded towards Christopher Street.

At the corner of Twelfth Street her way was obstructed by a group of lounging negro toughs and a woman or two. Some grubby white children looked on from the curb. One of the colored boys manipulated an accordion, languidly, lyrically. One or two shuffled to the music, indolently, happily. The girls talked and joked in shrill voices. Sadie tried to skirt the crowd.

‘Hi! My Gawd! Ef ’at ain’t Sadie! How you, gal? Whar yer gwine?’

Lucy! Dud, street dud. Alley cat. Slut.

The accordion player stopped his music.

Marcus!

In an instant all Sadie’s acquired polish and social veneer dropped from her. Jungle blood burned in her veins. Her savage ancestry claimed her. Here stood her enemy. Marcus! the man who had tricked her and robbed her. She pushed her way into the group.

‘You’s Marcus! You low-lifed nigger man. Thief!’

Lucy intruded.

‘He ain’t no Marcus!’ she howled. ‘Is yer, Cephas?’

The other boys laughed. Marcus? Cephas! Cephas Hook.

But Black Sadie felt sure of her man. Her tongue was loosed as never before. She lit into him with vocal fury. She lit into Lucy too. Every vestige of civilization disappeared from her manner and her speech. Aunt Nancy or Quecene would have known their own. Daughter of Ella, nigger wench, and the gallows-bird, Lightfoot Mose. But Cephas listened idly to the tirade. Words meant nothing to him. The others drank in the situation delightedly. It was a good joke. Welcome diversion, a genuine fight, furious cat before a hound dog.

After a while Cephas broke in. He winked first at his audience. 'Lis'en, honey-bunch. You'se got de wrong number. 'Deed, my name is Cephas. I ain't never seed you befo'. I don' know nuthin' 'bout no Marcus-ses. You speaks mighty pretty, but when I'm roused I'm roused. You better lay yo' lip offen me.' Thus Cephas.

But it was Marcus. Sadie was sure of that. She broke into a fresh tirade. Such invective. So vindictive. Furious African female. Unconcernedly Marcus began to play his accor-dion again. He kept one eye on Sadie. Would nothing move him? Never before had such anger shaken Sadie. It possessed her.

Marcus (or Cephas) spoke again. 'Dis here

sweet gal,' he said. 'Don' she love me, tho'? I thinks I better take her long home wid me.' He slung his accordion over his shoulder and moved on Sadie. The boys laughed afresh. Sadie broke away. Fear replaced anger.

Lucy followed her down the street. 'Sadie, gimme er little change. I ain't had nuthin' ter eat fer two days.'

Indeed, she looked it. She had lost her old sprightliness. She had come down in the world. Ruined. But Sadie was furious with Lucy. If it had not been for Lucy she would never have met Marcus. And she had been cruelly wronged by Marcus . . . tricked . . . doped and robbed. Sadie robbed! The 'doggone nasty sneaking yaller hound, bo' pig!' She fled on her way. She left Lucy calling after her. Lucy lifted her strident voice and cursed her roundly.

For some blocks Sadie walked blindly, furiously. Cheated! No revenge for wrong but just her 'lip.' Helpless.

But she came at last to Christopher Street. She sought out the Cage of Lions. But the Cage of Lions was closed. On the door a board was nailed. 'Sold.'

In the apartment of Corda Van Corda tea-

cups, plates, and cocktail glasses littered the place. Late afternoon. The guests were gone. Black Sadie had not appeared. Corda Van Corda and Fellows lounged before a dying fire. Empty glasses; smoking cigarette stubs.

'Well, I'm glad the niggers are gone!' said Fellows. 'I feel like washing my hands.'

'They contribute a certain *élan* to life,' yawned Corda.

'Neurotic!'

'Did you say exotic?'

'No; neurotic. It's depravity . . . whites and niggers.'

'I don't agree with you. One must be amused.'

Silence.

'Poor old Countess,' lisped Corda. 'She's gone. It's a blessing. I hope she's seasick by now.'

'Cat! But I concur. Amelia's the only one who has had the initiative to try to slip her leash.'

'She didn't succeed. The Lasci turned the tables on her.'

'The old darling had to,' said Fellows. 'It was her one chance. Failure and opportunity in the air. She was lucky to catch the latter on

the drop. She knows she's been slipping for some time. Is she hardening with age, or is her particular brand of sophistication going out of style? She can't keep up. New York's too fast. The old girl knows it too. But the "Black Sadie" First Prize has put her on her feet again.'

'Right! . . . Have another cocktail?'

'No, thanks. The ice has watered it down.'

Corda put her hands behind her head. She propped her feet on a high cushion. She yawned repeatedly. Fellows thrust a cigarette into her mouth, lighting it for her.

'Will you stop yawning?' he exclaimed. 'Still, in a way,' he went on, 'the Countess has accomplished a great deal this winter. Her nigger hobby has quite caught on. People are taking it up. It's the thing to "see Harlem." It used to be the Tenderloin. But it's quite different, this. There's money in it.'

'Think so?' answered Corda. 'The Countess has spent a lot. What has she made out of it?'

'Exhilaration. That's enough for her. But Amelia got the Prize. That proved the Laschi's thesis. She felt vindicated.'

Corda did not reply. She tried to blow

smoke-rings over the knob of a chair post. The rings broke. They would not hang on. But Corda kept trying. The bracelets and bangles on her arm rattled every time she put her cigarette to her mouth or took it away.

‘Amelia will make something of her success. I hear she is deluged with orders for casts and new studies. I tried to poach on the Countess myself, but couldn’t pull it off.’

Corda still said nothing. She shut one eye to peer through a smoke-ring above her head. Fellows went on.

‘But I’ve a better idea now. I’m perfecting a scheme. I believe Black Sadie can be made use of.’

‘What’s your scheme?’

‘Well, everybody knows about her. She’s a fad just now. With the Countess out of the way and unable to interfere, I believe we can use Black Sadie very profitably.’

‘Why do you say “We”?’

‘I want you to come in with me. You can finance the scheme.’

‘I’m not in the least interested,’ said Corda. ‘Give me another Fatima.’

‘You haven’t heard me yet,’ continued Fellows. ‘It’s really a capital idea I have. But I

have no money. You have. Let us pool intellect and dollars.'

'You're insulting,' laughed Corda. 'But reveal your secret self. What's your idea? Let's have your plan.'

'Just this: a cabaret. The Black Sadie . . . ultra-smart . . . and ultra-expensive, of course. Isn't it great!'

Corda cocked an ear. She began to be interested. Fellows enlarged on his plan.

'It will checkmate the Countess,' he ended.

'That's the best argument you have,' cried Corda. 'Done! But how'll we catch the bird?'

The 'bird' at that moment fluttered at the door. Sadie was received cordially. No; she wouldn't have tea. She wouldn't stay. Since Madame Steel had gone, she must hurry home. She had an engagement to open a large charity bazaar for the new negro health center in Harlem.

The next day Fellows and Corda Van Corda called on Harvey.

'Keep Smiling,' said the motto on his desk.

A week later Sadie found herself signing a contract as 'headliner' for The Black Sadie Cabaret in 109th Street, near Broadway.

The Black Sadie Cabaret. *

Undertaker Raggs gave a party on the eve of his departure for the stage. He essayed to weld in a social way the diverse elements of his professional clientèle. Guests from Haiti, Trinidad, Jamaica, and a few native-born American negroes. He invited Sadie to the party, and he invited Professor Felton. He would have liked to have Madame Steel too, but, as she had snubbed him so often, he dared not risk asking her to come.

Madame Steel would have liked an invitation just so that she might have snubbed the mortician again. It angered her to be deprived of the chance. It was lesser consolation to criticize the affair. She sniffed in a superior fashion. She told Sadie she had no desire to attend such gatherings as an undertaker's dance. She hoped Sadie would decline the invitation. It would serve the impudent oaf just right. But Black Sadie said nothing. She never argued with Madame Steel. However, she went to the party.

Back of the undertaker's office was the 'show room,' a long apartment where the stock of coffins and caskets was kept. The show room had no ventilation and little light. True, there were several small square windows high up on

the wall near the ceiling. They did not open. The glass was darkest red and green. A porcelain 'dome' screwed to the ceiling and operated by a hanging cord emitted a flood of electric light.

For the occasion of the dance, the stock was moved into a room still farther back. It was not a large space, so the coffins and caskets had to be piled one on top of another. Their suggestive ends could be plainly seen through an open archway. The dangling bead portières barely separated the two apartments.

But no matter. The company did not mind. The number of guests was not great, not more than two score, but the 'show room' was jammed with dancers. They danced to the music of a grafonola. Slow moving.

Mr. Raggs was very affable. He delighted himself with his party. He saw that the different groups did not mix well, so he tried to talk and dance with everybody. He even tried to entertain the professor who sat in a morris chair out in the hallway. The professor quite shared Madame Steel's prejudices, but for the sake of his conservatory he condescended to attend his pupil's party.

Every now and then Raggs got himself with

Sadie. They danced together. His maneuver was to get her into the privacy of the room beyond the bead portières and there press his suit afresh. He did so several times. But Sadie as often refused him. No arguments prevailed with her. Raggs sighed and returned to the company.

The party was not a great success. It came to an end quite early, before midnight. Mr. Raggs wrote on one of his professional cards, 'No hard feelings, I hope? The offer is always open to you.' He leaned out of his second-story window and slipped the card under the sash of the window of the room where Sadie dwelt.

Black Sadie did not reply to the card.

'Keep Smiling.'

Lawyer Harvey sat at his desk grimmer than ever. He received two visitors. They came in reference to Black Sadie. They were not in very good tempers, for they considered themselves deprived of rightful gains by the client of Lawyer Harvey.

The first comer was a blondined young woman. 'Miss Constance Fisher.' She explained how Sadie had wronged her in the affair of the Jungle Book . . . deserted her after

she had spent a large sum of money on the scheme. She sought redress. The lawyer asked to see the contract which Sadie and Constance had signed. But there was no signed contract. Ah! So neither tears, lamentations, nor threats got another word from Mr. Harvey. 'Miss' Constance Fisher departed in anger that verged on despair.

The second visitor was a provocative Hebrew. His card read: 'Isaac Sacks: Producer.' He likewise asserted a lien on Black Sadie. Again there was no evidential contract.

Hard lines, but so.

The lawyer sat in stony silence until Mr. Sacks had exhausted himself. Then he opened the door for him. 'You black shyster, I'll see what the law can do for you!' And he departed. Mr. Harvey closed the door.

Firm hands. Mr. Harvey handled business well.

'Keep Smiling.'

New York is easily pleased if the pleasure is expensive. The Black Sadie Cabaret was very expensive. So by all odds it was a great success. From midnight till sunrise the tables were crowded.

Corda Van Corda had invested largely in money. Mr. Fellows was equally lavish in ideas. Excellent combination. The cabaret was large. It was round. The walls were hung with black velvet asparkle with sequins. Thirty tables in two concentric circles, and in the center a polished dance-floor. No limit to the dancing. The entire ceiling was iridescent glass through which light poured. Food aplenty. Wine aplenty. The Black Sadie Cabaret, 109th Street, near Broadway.

From time to time professional dancers and entertainers came into the dancing oval. First-class performances. But the real *pièce de résistance* was Black Sadie. When she appeared, the patrons of the cabaret excelled themselves in enthusiasm and applause. It was the thing to do. They did it. Follow the crowd in the latest fad. Black Sadie.

A tiny embossed figure of Black Sadie as the First Prize decorated each menu card and programme. The orchestra invented a way of playing fox-trots which they called 'Black Sadie.' One particular tune was called 'The Black Sadie.' When the guitars and saxophones gave out that peculiar wailing *motif*, the velvet curtains were drawn aside and Black

Sadie herself appeared. It was the thing for everybody to stand up and clap at her entrance. She was the headliner of the entertainment.

Black Sadie had a number of costumes, all elaborate, bizarre, expensive. One was of shimmering green silk with a wide loose belt of imitation pearls and a high headdress of heron's feathers, a heron feather fan. 'The River Nile.' Another costume was red and blue silk put together in curious geometric patterns, on her head a cap of amethysts, and her long thick hair sticking out in a brush straight away behind. On the programme this was called 'Night.' And she wore also upon occasion a floating mass of white tulle and lace built over a great cage, a wire frame, and an enormous white lace hat with sweeping aigrettes on the brim. Fellows named this get-up 'Mist with Thunder-Heart.'

In such magnificent clothes Black Sadie would appear. Headliner. When she reached the center of the dance-floor, the music would sob down to a low rhythm. Black Sadie would pause. Suspense. Everybody watched with bated breath. Then she would begin to move, very slowly, thighs, shoulders, or slightly bend

the knees in time with the music. Her voice sometimes caught up the melody from the violin or saxophone, the strings brushing underneath like a strong flow of water.

Sadie's act was esteemed superior to all the others. It was considered a marvel of lyrical perfection. But it was really nothing, no professional technic, only emphasis. However . . . the patrons of the cabaret considered it wonderful. And the management meant them to do so. If the music beat faster, Black Sadie moved faster; if slower, slower. At the end she would go upon the orchestra stage, displace the drummer, and carry on the rhythm without losing a beat.

She invented a number of curious things to do at this climax . . . swishing sandpaper together, beating a silver triangle, tapping cymbals, brushing the drumhead with a fly-swatter, jingling little bells, whacking a board. Her small black hands flew agilely from one thing to another, doing so many things quickly. The orchestra boys called it 'jazzing' the music. Black Sadie would make her exit in a wild clamor of sound.

It was clever, the management of Black Sadie's performance. She never appeared

oftener than once a night. Sometimes only three or four times a week. It was uncertain. Piquant parsimony. It made good lure for patronage. The appearances of Black Sadie were precious to the public. One never knew if she would come or not. Take a chance at the Black Sadie Cabaret.

Sometimes, instead of ending her act by playing the 'traps,' Sadie moved about among the tables. She autographed menu cards. The happy, lucky patrons took the cards home as great prizes. Black Sadie's cards. People are easy to please, but the pleasure must seem elusive, just at the tips of the fingers, desirable. Good business.

The cabaret grew in popularity. The prices rose sky-high. It was difficult to get reservations for supper at the Black Sadie. They had to be taken days ahead of time. Money poured in. Sadie had never dreamed of so much money in all her life. Piles of money. Black Sadie received a tenth of the profits. The amount was larger every week.

Sadie was glad Mr. Harvey had forced her to sign the cabaret contract. She had not wanted to do so. For herself she really had wanted to accept Mr. Isaac Sacks's proposi-

tion. She longed to go on the stage, like Florence Miller, like Mr. Raggs. But the lawyer had insisted that the cabaret was the better opportunity. He did not tell her that Fellows and Corda Van Corda had already made it worth his while to take that stand. A handsome check. Perquisites for Harvey. He promised Black Sadie to the cabaret.

Professionals rehearsed Sadie for her 'acts.' Professionals made her up. Fellows wanted her to do one number that would recall the First Prize. Nude. But Sadie could not go so far. She refused. It would take more time to train her for that. As a compromise she was persuaded to do a new dance called the hula-hula. It was just imported from Hawaii. It split the difference between the nude and something else. She learned it because she felt protected by her costume of imitation grass and palm leaves, a lei around her neck, lei on arms and ankles. The hula-hula gave the spectators a thrill. Enthusiasm.

Black Sadie made more money than she had ever dreamed possible. She bought whatever her heart desired. Many things. She loved fine clothes best of all. Her dressmakers created 'modes' for her. She learned to do without a

corset. Near to the cabaret she had a handsome apartment. Sometimes she stayed there. But she really lived in Aunt Sally Bremmer's boarding-house. A comfortable secret dwelling. At the apartment she entertained, and there she kept her wardrobe.

Since the rise of Sadie's sun, even Harlem seemed beneath her. She rarely saw Madame Steel and her superior *milieu* of 'Island' gentry. Professor Felton never. Once she went to the Follies to see Raggs dance. She had a box. As she entered, people in all parts of the house craned their necks and nudged one another. They said: 'There's Black Sadie.'

Raggs sent for her to come back-stage. She met some of the outstanding members of the troupe. The 'big boss' himself asked her if he could make room for her in next year's bill. The Follies . . . a special number to herself. Black Sadie!

The tide of success lifted Sadie on its spacious bosom. She rode easily, no striving either way. Life carried her. Fate was kind. Fortune, unexpected, unsought, crowned her. Sadie herself was always passive. Other people handled her. Other people managed her concerns. Always so. First it had been Quecene

...going 'North,' service, big wages; then Peter took her to live with him. And the Countess carried her to New York, into another life and world. Amelia deflected her way by subterfuge, trickery. Very fortunately so, now. Lastly, Harvey and Corda Van Corda and Fellows had her. The Black Sadie Cabaret. Upward progress, steps . . . Ritchie pickaninny, seamstress, maid . . . model, First Prize, headliner, star. Black Sadie!

April. Rain, sunshine; sunshine, rain. Black Sadie had flower boxes on the window-ledges of her apartment. The janitor took out the stiff evergreens. He put in hyacinths and tulips. The hyacinths were white, the tulips dark, purplish. The florists called them 'Black Sadies.'

One afternoon Corda Van Corda came to Sadie's apartment. She had had a cablegram from the Countess Laschi. It was in her handbag. She extracted the yellow paper for Sadie to see it. The Countess said she and Amelia had taken passage on a large liner and might be expected in America before the end of the month.

Corda also had a rope of black pearls to show

Sadie. They also were in her handbag. Loose, no case. 'Beauties!' said Corda, dangling the string of pearls. 'From Tiffany. I am beginning to get some returns on my investment in the cabaret.' Sadie looked at the pearls. Corda slipped them back into the silken confusion of her reticule. It lay on the table.

Sadie showed Corda her flower boxes. There were some new gowns too for Corda to see. Corda particularly liked the cloth-of-silver evening wrap. Stunning! She tried it on.

'Go into the next room and look at yourself in the long mirror,' said Sadie.

Corda went. She was not out of the room two minutes. The door between the two rooms was open. Yet in that interval of time, Sadie had the rope of pearls. She thrust them into the earth of the flower boxes, deep down among the tulip bulbs. And very quickly she tore a small place in the hem of the handbag.

Corda liked the cloth-of-silver wrap. She liked the red feather fan too. Then she departed. Sadie saw her from the window get into her own car and drive herself away.

An hour later, Corda Van Corda called Sadie on the telephone. 'Sadie, my pearls. They're gone. There's a rent in my bag. Could

they by any chance have dropped out in your apartment? Please look carefully. Have the janitor look in the halls and on the pavement.'

No pearls.

Sadie buried the treasure deeper in the earth of the tulip boxes. After all Corda might get suspicious. The apartment might have to be searched.

True to type. Lifelong habit. In Sadie's blood. Klep.

The next week Corda Van Corda asked Sadie to meet her after a *matinée* at the opera. Five o'clock at the main entrance on Broadway. They would go together to a music place in Forty-Fourth Street to try out a new 'traps man' for the orchestra at the Black Sadie.

When Sadie reached the Opera House, it was already five o'clock, but the *matinée* was not yet over. Sadie walked down Broadway. Quite cold for April. A cup of hot coffee would be nice. Sadie turned into a lunch-room.

'A cup of coffee, please.'

'One coffee!'

The clatter and bang of a popular restaurant. The strident voices of the waiting-girls howling their orders through the serving-window.

Some one dropped a tray loaded with crockery. Smash! Sadie heard the unlucky waitress moan aloud. The manager appeared. His voice was very angry. Sadie heard the girl crying. Protests, explanations; no good.

‘You’re fired! See? This is the third time to-day. You’re fired!’

The girl collapsed at the next table to Sadie. Broken spirit. Weeping. Sadie turned to look at her.

Constance!

Black Sadie opened her bag. Inside was stuffed a roll of bills. She extracted the lot. As she passed Constance, going out, she thrust the money under her hands. Then she scurried for the door. Outside on the pavement, she glanced furtively back. Against the blurred glass of the restaurant door was pressed the white, tear-stained face of Constance. But it was radiant through the tears.

Black Sadie was soon lost in the crowd. She felt ever so happy.

Poor Constance!

Late afternoon at Aunt Sally Bremmer’s. In the kitchen Aunt Sally sat on a borax box with her feet in a tin pan of hot water. Leisure

hour between dinner and supper. She was preparing for church in the evening. Sadie sat at the table sipping a cup of very hot tea. She was just out of bed from her day's rest.

'Misery in mer foots,' remarked Aunt Sally, tucking her dress higher. 'I can't hardly walk none 'less I heats um furst. I gotter go ter church ter-night.'

Sadie refilled her cup from a pot on the stove. Boiled tea, very strong. A single ray of sunshine shot through the chink of the back door. It lay yellow-red across the good-natured face of Aunt Sally.

'Deed 'tis er wicked worl',' commented the old negress, enlarging on some secret moral process in her mind. 'Folks sho' needs religion. Dey needs hit strong. . . . Hit's er perishing worl', and 'tis few will "enter in."'

'I "come through" when I wuz fifteen,' said Sadie piously. Was it necessary to justify herself?

Aunt Sally paid no attention to her remark. She lifted first one foot, then the other, clear of the steaming water, shook them vigorously, and glanced at the horny toes. Then she replaced them in the foot-bath.

'Dere's judgment er-comin',' she continued.

'O Lordy, Lordy, save po' sinners at de golden bar. Ah, Lord!'

Aunt Sally muttered between speech and song, half talking, half crooning a religious melody. Everlasting comfort of the negro heart, solace of the soul, music, religion.

The buzzer above the door fluttered frantically.

'Dem damned kids ringin' my bell ergin,' expostulated Aunt Sally.

The buzzer sputtered again.

The door burst open. A little colored girl ran in. In her hand she carried a yellow envelope.

'Telegram fer Miss Sadie!'

Telegram from Corda Van Corda: 'Titanic wrecked at sea. Countess Laschi and Amelia Rogers lost.'

Black Sadie thrust the telegram into the red fire of the range.

Corda Van Corda put on black for the Countess. Mourning is often very becoming to fair women. Corda thought so. Sadie did not exhibit grief for the Countess or Amelia in her clothes, but she accompanied Corda Van Corda to memorial meetings and services held in va-

rious halls and churches of the city for the victims of the Titanic disaster. Mr. Fellows sometimes went too. He preferred the gatherings where survivors described their experiences . . . how the ship struck the iceberg . . . how people in the icy ocean got hauled aboard the lifeboats, while others drowned . . . how steamers came to the rescue.

Corda supplied herself with new handkerchiefs, all with mourning borders. She carried several at a time about her person because she always cried so lavishly. In tender tribute to the Countess she soaked her handkerchiefs in verbena scent. She hated the odor of verbena, but for the dear Countess . . .

The tragic end of Amelia Rogers made her First Prize seem deeply romantic. Its fame trebled. The little statue was cast in bronze and set up in the principal foyer of the New York Public Library. A wreath tied with crêpe lay at its feet. Crowds of people flocked to see the Black Sadie First Prize cast. And the model shared in the public interest, or was it curiosity? The Black Sadie Cabaret was jammed every night, long before midnight, long after sunrise. The people came to see Black Sadie.

The drummer in the cabaret orchestra had become a 'traps man.' The number of instruments, traps, increased around his stool. He knew just when to hand Sadie his drumstick and leap out of the way for her to end her act with 'jazz.' Sadie liked the man. She was sorry when he had to leave the orchestra. Because of a barking cough. He couldn't break it. It ruined the music. The management wouldn't stand for it. The 'traps man' had to leave.

It was hard to replace him. 'Traps' was a new stunt in orchestra playing. Its many possibilities had not at that time been developed and brought into vogue. Corda Van Corda and Sadie tried to find some one who would do. They visited numerous musical establishments looking for just that sort of drummer. But even Sixth Avenue failed to gestate a 'traps man' for the Black Sadie Cabaret. Professor Felton was appealed to in the very beginning. No assistance. He scorned the idea of flyswatters and sandpaper music. His conservatory was strictly 'classic.'

The situation grew serious. The manager, the owners, and the 'headliner' alike could not produce a new 'traps man.' One night the saxophone man, whose body was small as a boy's

and whose face was like a very old monkey's, told the manager that he had found some one for the place. His name was Lazy Tiger, alias Altemus Tweed, or the other way around, and he now waited belowstairs to be interviewed and tried.

The manager had up the Lazy Tiger. He tried him out. For 'traps' he seemed created. With eyes almost shut, body swaying, he handled the traps like lightning, marvelously. The manager was delighted. Lazy Tiger was employed on the spot. He went into the boys' dressing-room to put on the olive-green silk uniform. The suit given him was a close fit, but his magnificent physique appeared to all the better advantage. The muscles of his arms and legs . . . in the green silk sleeves and pants . . . 'Watch out, girls!' exclaimed the manager.

Sadie heard that a new man had been found when she came to the cabaret later in the evening. She was glad of that. She was tired of the straight drum-beating, which the substitute drummer had done, and she was tired of the dances and the autographing she had had to do because there were no traps. To-night she would go back to the hula-hula and at the high

moment spring at the traps. She sent word to the Lazy Tiger to be ready for her.

But what was Sadie's surprise, when she came into the dancing oval, to see that Altemus Tweed, alias the Lazy Tiger, or the other way around, was no other than Marcus or Cephas Hook. The impudent fellow winked knowingly at her over the tops of his cymbals and drums. Sadie was highly incensed. She put both spite and chagrin into her hula-hula. Lazy Tiger played up to her every inch. When she seized the traps herself, he sprang onto the floor and did the hula-hula with the utmost abandon and vigor.

The applause drowned the loud banging Sadie gave the big drum.

She was furious. But everybody else was highly pleased. They demanded that the boy and girl do the dance together. And they did. Both antagonistic. Hatred. It was a savage dance.

The manager was sure he had found a prize in the Lazy Tiger.

But Black Sadie did not come to the cabaret for two nights. She hid herself at Aunt Sally's and would not come out. Sulks. 'But dey ain't no nigger man goin' ter down dis chile!' she

assured herself with determination. It was natural for Sadie to drop into dialect. Nigger!

During Sadie's self-imposed absence from the cabaret she solaced her soul in Aunt Sally's company. She spent much time in the kitchen of the boarding-house. She told Aunt Sally how she hated men, particularly 'yaller buck coons.' 'Ah, Lord!' agreed Aunt Sally.

Warm days now. May. The back door of the kitchen stood open. Life appeared in the alley. Intimate, neighborhood affairs in the alley. But the neighborhood missed the stimulation of the Establishment Raggs. Raggs's place was for sale. Doors and windows closed. The black wagons no longer drove up to the mortician's back door to discharge the long covered hampers. Stiffs. It was a sad lack to local entertainment.

One Saturday afternoon Sadie sat with Aunt Sally in the kitchen door. Fowls with their necks wrung lay on the floor. Sadie plucked them. Aunt Sally 'jerked' the carcasses. When the handfuls of feathers tore out, there was a soft ripping sound most familiar in Sadie's ear. Sadie thought of the Fishers' kitchen and of home in Virginia.

She began to talk. She told Aunt Sally about Ole Miss, about Aunt Nancy and Aunt Thorry, about the chickens, so many of them, enough for all, at the big house. She remembered the time the angry dominica hen flew up in her face, when she was a little girl. The pressed hen's-wing fan was at home now, in the battered tin trunk that had been Quecene's . . . under Aunt Thorry's bed.

Very pleasant in the May sunshine picking chickens, talking, remembering happy days at home. Across the way two neighbors chatted, laughing. Together they exposed the shortcomings of their husbands. Some little children came and stood below the stoop to watch the plucking of the fowls. One of the little boys purloined a long piece of entrail from the waste-bucket at Aunt Sally's feet. Dangling it, he threatened the little girls. They ran about screaming.

'Fetch dem guts back here!' commanded Aunt Sally, irately. 'You stop flingin' dem chicken guts around!'

But the children ran away. Out of the alley. Gone. Screaming.

Aunt Sally subsided. 'Ah, Lord, chillun,' she grumbled.

Very quiet in the alley. The shadows lengthened. Aunt Sally tumbled the pieces of cut chicken into a pan of salt water. 'Fried chicken,' murmured Aunt Sally to herself. Fried chicken for Sunday dinner in the boarding-house.

Over the roofs from the street came the noise of a row. Many voices. Curses. Then screams. More curses. The sound of a great commotion.

A man came pounding down the alley, running for his life. At the moment all the doors were shut save Aunt Sally's. Not a place to hide. But the man saw the one open door. In he came, slamming it behind him.

'Oh, my Gawd, lady, won't yer please hide me?'

Aunt Sally gave a cry. 'Who you?'

Sadie seized the poker. Noise of footsteps running in the alley.

'Oh, my Gawd! Oh, my Gawd!'

Sadie sensed something familiar in the tone of that voice. She looked into the fellow's face.

Lucky Andrew!

'Ef dey finds me here, dey'll arrest you too,' panted the fugitive.

That frightened the women!

'Lord have mussy!' wailed Aunt Sally.

'Man, how you come here? What you done done?' Thus Sadie.

'Ah, Lord! Sadie, hide me! Do please hide me!' Andrew recognized Sadie. He went down on his knees. 'I done cut up er guy . . . fair fight . . . He drawed er knife on me.'

'Dis yo' man?' asked Aunt Sally of Sadie.

'He's my brother,' answered Sadie. 'Kin we hide him till dark?'

In a trice Aunt Sally dragged aside the piece of oilcloth on the floor by the table. Underneath was a trapdoor to a cellar. Aunt Sally jerked up the trap. 'Git in dar quick!' she cried.

Lucky Andrew!

Aunt Sally flung open the kitchen door. She bounced busily about the stove. 'Ef I could I sho'ly would stan' on de rock whar Moses stood,' she sang aloud. Sadie swept the floor.

Police and a crowd in the alley. 'Lady, did a man run by here?'

'Man!' queried Aunt Sally, surprise in her tone. 'One mought er run past,' she conceded. 'I don' pay no 'tention ter folks runnin' up an'

down dis here alley. What kind er man is you-all lookin' fer? What he done do?'

The policeman snorted. Nothing to be got here. On the pursuers went. Aunt Sally poked the fire. Sadie swept the chicken feathers off the floor. Utter innocence.

At dark Lucky Andrew was brought up from the cellar. The same old Lucky Andrew. He did not seem to Sadie much older in appearance than he had when he left home years ago. Down one cheek there was a shadow. Was it a scar or a fold in the skin?

Sadie dressed herself and went out to do some shopping. She went all the way to New York, away down on Seventh Avenue. When she came back, she had a complete change of clothes for Andrew.

Lucky Andrew! Nobody ever suspected he had killed a man in a Harlem street. He became a boarder at Aunt Sally Bremmer's. Sadie got him a job for 'rough work' at the cabaret; ashes, garbage. Lucky Andrew! Blood is thicker than water. Nigger blood. Ritchie blood. Kin, Andrew and Black Sadie. He called her 'Miss Sadie' and was always very deferential.

Black Sadie received a really pathetic letter from Miss Elsie Fisher '... because you were dear Aunt Roberta's friend.' The Fishers were having hard times. Miss Elsie Fisher naïvely wrote Sadie the private affairs of the family. Mrs. Fisher, senior, was dead. Six weeks ago. She had had a stroke. 'Papa' felt the disgrace of Timothy's divorce so keenly that he had made Timothy leave East Orange. Rob had 'got in trouble' and had gone to Canada. Herb was working with 'Papa.' The shock of 'dear Aunt' Roberta's tragic end had aged Mamma.' Now, 'Grandma Perkins' was dead. 'Yesterday afternoon she fell asleep in her chair and never woke up. But she had been ailing for days. She kept asking for you. Mamma wants to know if you will come to the funeral. We all would like to see you.'

Sadie was truly sorry for the Fishers. She would certainly go to East Orange for Mrs. Perkins's funeral. She ordered a wreath of Black Sadie tulips from a Fifth Avenue florist. 'Black Sadie' she wrote on her card. The florist's eyes nearly popped out of his head to think that he was actually talking with the real Black Sadie, truly selling that famous person a wreath of tulips.

Sadie went to Hoboken on the Hudson Tube. Then she went to East Orange by the D. L. & W. At the Brick Church station she left the train and walked through the near-by streets to Park Avenue. Very familiar ground. Late May. The elms and bits of lawns were very green. The caladiums and geraniums grew plentifully around the front-porch steps of all the homes. East Orange.

The shades were drawn in the Fishers' house. Yet there was a sense of somber activity about the place. A line of gloomy motors, hearse and cars, lined the street. A man in a frock coat stood at the front door. Even the iron deer seemed downcast in mien.

Sadie turned in at the gate. In the hall Herb met her. 'Lo, Sadie,' he said. Most of the furniture was moved aside, hall, living-room, and dining-room too. It was amply supplemented by folding chairs. In the living-room alcove, where the cascading fern usually stood on its terra-cotta pedestal, was a wheeled affair on which undertakers rest caskets. Flowers, wreaths and designs, lay about it on the floor.

Herb and Sadie went into the pantry. Easier to talk there on old-time footing. Herb

had grown. His fingers were badly stained with nicotine. His breath was vile. Halitosis.

‘They’re getting ready to bring her down now,’ said Herb. ‘The minister’s upstairs with Mamma. He’ll come down soon. Then you can go up. I know Mamma wants to see you.’

Miss Rosie Fisher tumbled down the back stairs in a flood of tears. She wept on Sadie’s bosom. Down the front stairs came the coffin.

Death and other misfortunes in the family quite unnerved the Fishers. Tears stood in Mr. Fisher’s eyes when he grasped Sadie’s hand. Mrs. Fisher wept aloud.

‘Now, Mamma, don’t do that,’ protested Miss Elsie Fisher. ‘You won’t be able to go through with it if you cry.’ ‘It’ being the funeral ceremony. Mrs. Fisher wept afresh at the rebuke from her daughter.

Sadie sat near the pantry door ‘during the exercises.’ The rooms were full. People whispered: ‘There’s Black Sadie! She used to be help here.’ She saw that her wreath of tulips lay conspicuously at the foot of the casket.

When the Presbyterian minister had finished his duties, the people filed past the open casket ‘to take leave.’ Old Mrs. Perkins looked as placid as a boiled dumpling lying tucked in her

casket. She wore a gray silk dress. The yoke and the cuffs were shirred. Poor old lady! Sadie felt really sad and soft-hearted looking at the white, dead face . . . And all the kindness of the Fishers, old friends in East Orange.

When she got back to New York, it was time to go to the cabaret. Sadie had enjoyed her trip to the funeral. It started so many memories . . . old times in service . . . the big wooden tenement in Orange Street, Newark . . . and the Star Church . . . good times . . . Peter and the rooms where they lived in Harrison. Sadie really meditated on all these things. She was not wholly without a heart.

In June the estate of the Countess Laschi was sold, the house in Park Avenue and all it contained. Many other brownstone fronts in that neighborhood were also falling under the hammer. The district bade fair to grow up into skyscraping apartment-hotels.

Sadie bought the 'Honorable Mention' of herself. The high sum she paid appalled her. No wonder she was famous. Why, in Seventh and Sixth Avenues most lovely pictures of fashionable ladies, beautiful scenery, or religious subjects could be purchased for one

twentieth and less for what she had to pay for 'Esclave.' Honorable Mention, merely a head.

Sadie hung the picture in her apartment, not at Aunt Sally's. Aunt Sally would have esteemed it 'trash' . . . just some charcoal lines. Sadie looked at the picture a great deal. What made it so expensive? Could that really be she? Did she have a head like that? Funny!

Corda Van Corda and Mr. Fellows had a disagreement over the new traps man. Corda was 'crazy' about him. She wanted to open a new cabaret where she could feature the Lazy Tiger. Fellows objected. He held her to the terms of the Black Sadie Cabaret contract. Corda pouted. She liked to have her way.

Corda Van Corda 'had fallen' for the Lazy Tiger. She gave parties for him at her apartment. She made him drive with her in her car. The Lazy Tiger felt uncomfortable with the 'white ooman.' She mystified him.

'Mistake, old girl,' remonstrated Fellows. 'Don't try to civilize the niggers. Use 'em.'

'I intend to,' snapped Corda.

'Pervert!'

'I suspect you of being stupid,' said Corda.

Fellows banged out of the room. Corda's angry laughter followed him. She smoked one

cigarette after another, stamping angrily about the place. Then she called up the Lazy Tiger on the telephone. They dined together in a chop suey restaurant in the Bronx.

Sadie hated Marcus more and more. He stole her fire. Undoubtedly the entertainment at the Black Sadie Cabaret was vastly more popular since he came. Never could there be such a traps man. And he could dance! Sadie was jealous of sharing honors with him in her own cabaret. She hoped for occasions to humiliate him. If she could just 'get his goat'!

But the Lazy Tiger treated her indifferently. He behaved exactly as though the whole 'show' belonged to him. Sadie's dancing seemed at his command. The impudent, low-down nigger! Nothing Sadie could do got the slightest 'rise' out of him. The situation made Sadie very angry.

She complained to the manager, but got nothing for her pains. She went to Corda on the subject, and Corda snubbed her. Told her to mind her own business. She tried Fellows. Fellows snorted angrily. His mood gave Sadie no satisfaction. So she went to her lawyer. 'Keep Smiling' said the framed motto on Harvey's desk, but nothing to be got from

Harvey. 'Ah, Lord!' said Aunt Sally Bremmer, when she listened to the rehearsal of Sadie's jealous story. 'Ain't nigger men turrubul!'

Sadie went again to Fellows. She had a plan. She proposed it. Fellows's eyes glittered. Trick on Corda and Lazy Tiger? He promised Sadie his unalloyed assistance. 'I'll show that coon something he'll remember,' declared Black Sadie.

Two nights later the cabaret was packed with smart, dissipated people. Both Corda and Fellows were there. The Lazy Tiger reigned in the orchestra. He had a new trick . . . rising to his feet for a step or two between beats, vaulting over the bass drum into his seat again, and resuming the rhythm of the music by tearing up strips of silk. All eyes were upon him.

'What is this New Dance on the card?' asked Corda, leaning toward Fellows. 'Who does it, Black Sadie or the Lazy Tiger? I didn't authorize it.'

'Wait and see,' said Fellows. 'I brought you here particularly to see it. I arranged it myself.'

Corda sent secretly to find out if Sadie were in her dressing-room. No. Then the New

Dance must be something for the Lazy Tiger to do. Corda felt pleased at that. She sat back in her little gilded chair with happy complacency.

She had not long to wait. In less than a quarter of an hour, the manager appeared on the orchestra platform. The music stopped. 'New Dance!' he shouted. 'The Black Sadie!'

The orchestra boys were ready. The familiar Black Sadie air on saxophones and strings. But the traps man looked taken by surprise. He fumbled his sticks and paraphernalia. He was not ready for the 'act.' Was it possible that he had not been informed?

But no time to waste. Black Sadie was already in the dancing oval. The onlookers gave a gasp of amazement. There was Black Sadie, literally, like the First Prize, nude save for flashing little clusters of gems strapped to her person. Her ebony skin shone; her hair bristled in a savage bush above her pear-shaped skull. Up were her hands behind her head, and she danced . . . as never before . . . a dead set at Marcus.

Uproar. Laughter, clapping, calls. The music wailed and clashed. The dance lasted scarcely a minute. She was gone again before

the astonishment of patrons, of Corda Van Corda, of the Lazy Tiger, could die. Over the tables she flung handfuls of Black Sadie tulips. Then she was upon Marcus with a great white rose. She thrust it against his face, against his nose.

The Lazy Tiger sprang to his feet. Tears streamed from his eyes. His olive-green silk person bent in a spasm of sneezing. Everybody roared with laughter, led by the orchestra boys. They did not like the popular traps man.

Trick! Black Sadie had had her innings with the Lazy Tiger. Open war. But she was gone.

‘Black Sadie! Black Sadie!’ shouted the guests.

Corda Van Corda was furious. She swept out of the restaurant. She made a frightful scene in Sadie’s dressing-room. There Fellows found the two cats, the white and the black, scratching at each other. Sadie sat on the dresser, still nude, pouting, sullen, delighted. Corda paced the floor. She trembled with anger. ‘Brava!’ cried Fellows. He drew the storming Corda off.

The Lazy Tiger was no good for the rest of the night. He sneezed continually, and his

eyes ran. The violent red pepper. He changed his clothes and left the cabaret.

Black Sadie dressed herself and motored to her apartment. She was quite satisfied with her performance. What matter if she had not told Fellows of the biting powder in the white rose? That was her lookout. It could be settled later. She was wholly glad to have played off Marcus. 'His goat' at last.

Nearly daylight. Sadie made herself a cup of cocoa and went to bed. It was an unusual thing for her to spend the night in the apartment.

When Aunt Sally Bremmer got up at crack of dawn to begin the duties of the day, she noticed that Sadie's door was ajar. She peeped into the room. No Sadie. Smooth bed. Now, where could 'dat chile be'? Sunrise; mighty late for Sadie to be still at the cabaret. She was usually in between four and five.

Aunt Sally climbed the stairs to the top of the house. She knocked at Lucky Andrew's door. Where was Sadie? Did he know? Andrew didn't. He had heard her motor drive off from the cabaret before two o'clock. Aunt Sally expressed herself as 'oneasy.' Would Andrew please go back to the cabaret and in-

quire? Would he inquire at the apartment? She gave him a cup of hot coffee before he left. Andrew grumbled at the foolish errand, but he went at Aunt Sally's wish to look for Sadie.

Broad day in the streets. People going to work. Harlem ahum.

When Sadie grew famous and well-to-do, she gave up wearing white cotton nightgowns. She adopted instead colored pongee pyjamas. And she had colored silk boudoir caps to match the pyjamas.

A janitress came every morning to Sadie's apartment to dust and set things to rights. Her name was Pearl, and when she was sober, she was quite good-natured, but it was not very often. Usually she did the work in very bad temper, but she did it very well.

The night Sadie treated the Lazy Tiger to a sniff of red pepper, she slept in her apartment. In the morning a noise of some one moving a chair in the next room awoke Sadie from sleep. Of course it must be Pearl. Sadie called to her. No answer.

Out of the bed she got in her green pongee pyjamas and silk headgear, green Russian leather mules on her feet. Sadie opened the

door into the next room. The heavy draperies were drawn across the big windows, so the light was quite dim. Sadie could barely see the tables and chairs. She peered about in the shadows. No Pearl. Silence.

At that moment the draperies moved. Sunlight shot into the room. Standing in the folds of the curtains was Marcus. Sadie stood stock-still looking at him, and Marcus held his ground looking at her. She swallowed hard to recover her voice. She was badly frightened.

‘What you want, nigger? How you git in my apartment?’

Marcus did not speak. What are locks to men-about-town?

Sadie saw that his eyes were still badly inflamed . . . and the villainous set of his jaw . . . head thrust forward . . . On the table by her bed was a telephone. Could she reach it? Could she get inside the bedroom, slam and lock the door so quickly that Marcus could not follow?

‘You git outen here.’ She fenced for time. Perhaps he would go away.

‘I ain’t er-goin’ ter leave dis place till I done had my satisfaction wid you.’ The Lazy Tiger spoke softly, slowly.

'I ain't got no money,' said Sadie desperately.

'Tain't money I wants,' answered Marcus. 'It's you, you sweet little black bitch.'

'Oh, my Gawd!' cried Sadie. 'Don't you tetch me, nigger.' But Sadie realized mere bold words were worse than useless. She was helpless.

Still Marcus did not move.

Sadie thought again of the telephone. Could she make it? Backwards she sprang, slamming the door. But Marcus was just as quick. He caught the door with his foot as it swung to. In an instant he had Sadie by the arm. Sadie fought like a tigress. She scratched. She bit. She wriggled and kicked. The green leather mules flew off her toes. The green pyjama jacket was torn into shreds. Marcus gripped her. They smashed over a chair. They crashed into the table. Telephone and a number of small objects rattled all over the floor.

'If you hollers, I'll kill you.'

But Sadie had not thought of calling. Locked in his arms, she fought with all her strength. No avail. Marcus bore down her resistance. 'Nigger! Nigger!' Sadie sobbed.

Some one at the door. Marcus did not hear.

Sadie did not hear. She gave way before her assailant, limp in his arms.

But at that precise moment some terrible force wrenched Marcus away. Aunt Sally Bremmer had not sent Andrew to look for Sadie for nothing. The coal-heaving, ditch-digging arms of Lucky Andrew lifted Marcus clean off the floor. 'Oh, my Gawd! Oh, my Gawd!' choked Sadie.

It did not take Andrew long to kill Marcus. He laid the limp body on the floor. Quite a quick job. Andrew was satisfied. He stood stupidly by, rubbing his big calloused hands. Easy come, easy go, matters of life and death to some people. The Ritchies.

What now?

Sadie recovered her wits. She slipped on a dressing-gown and took charge of the situation. Something had to be done as quickly as possible. No doubt about it, Marcus was certainly dead. Sadie glanced down at his doubled-up body. Many horrible thoughts ran through her head. What if Pearl should come! The police . . .? The body must be got out of the way. Oblivion, too, for herself and Andrew. Inconsequential for such as Marcus and Andrew to disappear . . . easy come, easy go for

obscure negro men. But Sadie? Could she disappear so smoothly? New York and the world knew her very well. It is sometimes a great handicap to be famous. Sadie generated but one thought; escape.

She made Andrew drag out of the closet an enormous Saratoga trunk. Together they crushed the body of Marcus inside, locked and strapped down the lid. Then Sadie dressed herself. She packed a suitcase with clothes. She dug out of her flower boxes the buried rope of pearls. She was ready to leave.

Pearl ambled in to do her morning's chores. She was sober. Therefore in a pleasant frame of mind. Sadie announced that she was going on a trip. Would Pearl call up her husband from the basement to help Andrew carry the trunk downstairs? Such a plausible tale. Pearl never doubted a word of it.

A taxi came. On went the trunk. Sadie and Andrew inside. At the Grand Central Station, Sadie bought a ticket for Chicago, and on it she checked the large Saratoga trunk. On Forty-Second Street, she met Andrew. She gave him the ticket. She tore up the check and threw it away.

Good-bye, Lucky Andrew! A simple matter

for you to fade into oblivion . . . Chicago . . . the West . . . the coal mines . . . easy come, easy go.

Sadie shook hands with Lucky Andrew. Then she got into a taxi. She got out at the Pennsylvania Station. Good-bye, New York! Niggers surely do have trouble! Sadie stuffed her fingers in her ears when the train dashed through the tubes under the Hudson River.

Philadelphia. In Broad Street Station Black Sadie walked unnoticed in the crowd. Just a colored girl. She bought a ticket for Washington. Express at two o'clock.

White-coated porters stood at the little steps before the entrances to the Pullman cars. They carried whisk-brooms in their hands. 'Parlor car? Parlor car?' they called. Some people handed them their grips and mounted the little step into the car; others looked away, passing down the platform to the coaches ahead. Parlor car? Parlor car? Train for Chester, Wilmington, Baltimore, and Washington, leaving two o'clock; change in Washington for points south and west.

One of the Pullman cars was called Altoona. When Black Sadie came down the platform on

her way to the day coach, the porter of the Altoona grinned with pleasure. He recognized her instantly. Sadie recognized him too. It was Peter.

On the way from Philadelphia to Washington, Peter went forward a number of times to talk to Sadie. Sadie was rejoiced to see him. Let by-gones be by-gones. Peter was just the same. Sadie too. Surely they were made for each other.

Where was Sadie going? Home; tired of New York; tired of Yankee white folks; home. Was this Peter's route? Yes; Philadelphia to Washington. Married? Oh, no. 'I never could love nobody but you, Sadie.' Same with Sadie. 'Then, let's us git married at las'?' asked Peter.

Peter had a little place in Virginia, near Washington. He wanted to farm. He had bees. Sadie would like it. Sadie thought she would. How satisfactory everything was!

When they reached Washington, Peter and Sadie went to get a marriage license. Sadie told Peter if he wanted her to call herself Lily she would. Peter had always wanted that. So Sadie wrote down her name as Lily Harrison, from Newark, New Jersey. They stood up

before a colored minister-preacher in Georgetown and that night they spent under their own roof on the Virginia side of the Potomac River.

‘No use in making a row,’ remonstrated Fellows to Corda Van Corda. ‘The niggers are gone. Look for a needle in a haystack! We’ll get another girl somewhere, and a traps man. The cabaret public will be none the wiser. Eh, old darling?’

‘A rose by any other name will smell as sweet.’ The popular Black Sadie Cabaret continued to do an excellent business.

The body of Marcus lay in the Chicago morgue for several days. Dead coon. Nobody claimed it, so it was given to medical men for scientific purposes.

Easy come, easy go, niggers.

THE END

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